Confidential Talks with Young Women

SPERRY

INTRODUCTORY BY

Frances E. Willard,

Mary Wood Allen M.D.

THE WORKS OF LYMAN B. SPERRY, M. D.

Husband and Wife

A Book of Information and Advice for the Married and the Marriageable. 12mo, cloth, $1.00.

"The subject is treated thoroughly and in the right spirit. It states plainly and fully the main physical facts that most need to be known in order to preserve health and promote domestic happiness."—PROF. W. B. CHAMBERLAIN, *Chicago Theological Seminary.*

Confidential Talks with Young Men

Tenth Thousand. 12mo, cloth, 75 cents.

"I, too, believe that it is capable of doing much good. I should be glad to have it widely circulated in an age when the dangers it is calculated to lessen are, it seems to me, greatly promoted by many insidious and increasingly numerous influences."—PRES. CARTER, *Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.*

Confidential Talks with Young Women

Introduction by Dr. Mary Wood Allen. *Fourth thousand.* 12mo, cloth, 75 cents.

"Most successful in its blending of delicacy with frankness. It is scholarly, yet simple and clear, always discreet and reverent and sufficiently inclusive. Parents and teachers will do well to avail themselves of its aid."—*The Congregationalist.*

Physiology, Fear and Faith

Some Facts Concerning Disease, Drugs and Doctors. 12mo, cloth, net 35 cents.

"One of the clearest statements of the influence of both fear and faith on the physical system published. It is stimulating and stirring. It is boldly outspoken and will be a help to many a young man. Every one should read this book and pass it around."—*Christian Century.*

Confidential Talks with Young Women : : : : :

By Lyman B. Sperry, M.D.
Author of "Confidential Talks with Young Men," "Husband and Wife," Etc.

With an Introduction by Dr. Mary Wood Allen
and Commendation by Frances E. Willard

Fleming H. Revell Company
New York : Chicago : Toronto

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1898, by Fleming H. Revell Company, in the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington, D. C. All rights reserved.

COMMENDATORY NOTE.

Science purifies everything it touches, and the scientific treatment of subjects that have been regarded as too delicate and personal for consideration in a book to be placed in the hands of young women, seems to be the solution of a difficult problem. All the laws of God are helpful and holy, and when those laws are "written in our members" it is not only the highest wisdom, but the most sacred duty of those who have the care of us in youth, to make us acquainted with them as soon as we are old enough to hear those wretched travesties that thoughtless people and young children are likely to foist upon us instead of the truth.

If I were asked how early we should teach a girl the reality of her own being, I would answer, "Just in time to set her mind to the right key before the jarring dissonance of the wrong one smites her innocent ear." In these days of infinitely varied communication among all classes of people by means of printer's ink, and of that popular education which at an early age brings together classes who in their homes are kept entirely separate, the problem of conserving the purity of our girls and young women has grown complex, and the most thoughtful parents and teachers have

believed that by as much as intelligence is more desirable than ignorance, is virtue more desirable than innocence. For we have learned by experience that the last is often but a rope of sand when tested by temptation, while the first is a bright Damascus blade of protection and defense.

I am personally acquainted with the author of this little book, who is connected with one of our best Congregational colleges in the West and who brings not only an adequate scientific preparation, but a pure mind to his high task.

The girl who feels a confidential freedom in bringing to the home sanctuary the mysterious questions sure to be answered somewhere, will be likely to maintain purity of word and deed even amid youth's manifold temptations; and after an experience of more than half a century (including the unusual opportunity of observation that the teaching of three thousand pupils has involved), I earnestly entreat good men and women to place in the hands of the girls under their care, some simply worded scientific work that will explain them to themselves, and among many others that I have examined, I can conscientiously give a high place to this little book, the object of which, from first to last, is to help young women to a true observance of the decalogue of God written in natural law, and the ritual of the body which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

FRANCES E. WILLARD

Twilight Park, Catskill Mountains, N. Y. August, 1894

PREFACE.

The world is full of mysteries and surprises. Life teems with wonders. The growing human mind naturally bristles with interrogation points. Every observant and thoughtful girl, before reaching her "teens" asks, over and over again, as she looks out upon life and thinks of her own brief existence and limited experiences, "Where did I come from?" "How did I get here?" "What does my life mean?" In response to the request of a large number of parents and teachers, I am going to tell you, in these "Confidential Talks," many things about this strange matter, together with certain interesting and important facts connected with it. I shall try to tell you all you need to know till you shall be settled in a home of your own, and consequently have a more immediate and personal interest in the subject It is, indeed, a wonderful series of facts that

I am about to lay before you. No fairy tale was ever invented that can compare in interest with many things I shall tell you about this wonderful subject; no other sphere of human life exhibits more wisdom, ingenuity, delicacy and skill on the part of the great and good Father of all.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION.....	7
I.	THE MYSTERY EXPLAINED.....	11
II.	REPRODUCTION AS EXHIBITED BY PLANTS.....	15
III.	THE REPRODUCTION OF INVERTEBRATE ANIMALS.....	23
IV.	THE PROPAGATION OF FISHES, BIRDS AND MARSUPIALS.....	27
V.	THE PROCESS AS EXHIBITED BY MAMMALS.....	33
VI.	THE REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS OF THE HUMAN FEMALE.....	38
VII.	THE AGE OF PUBERTY—PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHANGES.....	42
VIII.	SUBJECTIVE SYMPTONS OF PUBERTY	48
IX.	SIGNIFICANCE OF OVULATION AND MENSTRUATION.....	54

CHAPTER PAGE

X. Some Obstacles to Healthful Development..... 59
XI. The Results of Certain Customs 65
XII. Causes and Danger of Defective Menstruation..... 70
XIII. Nutrition or Body-Building.. 75
XIV. Physical Exercise and Muscular Development..... 80
XV. Dress—Its Use and Abuse.... 85
XVI. Mental Temptations and Habits 107
XVII. Physical Pollution or Abuse.. 113
XVIII. Certain Important Considerations..... 120
XIX. Wifehood and Motherhood.... 126
XX. Additional Matters of Importance..... 129
XXI. Rest and Sleep..... 135
XXII. Amusements and Recreation.... 144
XXIII. Conclusion..... 162

INTRODUCTION.

If I could look into the heart of every girl-reader of this book I should find in it some dream of future happiness. "Some day," you say to yourself, "I will have a little home of my own, a place full of light and beauty for me, and one who loves me." You are planning how you will furnish and adorn this home, and perhaps you have even chosen the one who shall share it with you. But I am wondering now if you have thought of the most beautiful adornment of a home, that is, a healthful family. You certainly have not planned for sickness, but you may not have thought that the health of a family depends largely upon the knowledge and wisdom of the woman who is the center of the home-circle. You purpose marrying, but you make no physical preparation for marriage. You do not consider how necessary health is, and you are

careless in maintaining it. You shrink from the indelicacy of learning the truth, and so you propose to do that which is far more indelicate,—to marry, ignorant of the duties of the wife and mother. But perhaps in that dream of a home you have ignored the thought of motherhood; and the duties and trials of maternity will find you all unprepared. You think, it may be, that such a topic is not quite proper for young girls to think about. Time enough for that when the need comes. Ah! sad mistake! Do you know how many first-born children die because the young and ignorant mothers did not know how to take care of them? Is not that a dreadful price to pay for knowledge that might have been obtained by a little true, womanly forethought? Because this is a thought of the greatest sacredness and delicacy it should demand your most prayerful attention. To understand yourself, and how to attain and maintain vigorous health; to understand how even your girlish thoughts and deeds will make an impress upon your children and influence their eternal welfare; to study how to give them a dower of health

and purity—these are studies which demand your most profound consideration. The pursuit of this knowledge, in the true womanly spirit, will not brush the most ethereal bloom of modesty from your character, but will add to it a permanent grace and dignity and make you more worthy of woman's holiest mission.

This little book is written by one who speaks, not only with the earnestness of a friend but with the authority of a physician and with a most sincere desire to be of real benefit to you. And I, with the same motive and authority, and with the added interest of a mother, commend his words to you, requesting you to give them a careful reading and prayerful thought, that, by following the advice so kindly and judiciously given, you may become what Lowell calls "Earth's noblest thing, a woman perfected."

With a motherly interest in every girl, I am,

Most cordially your friend,

MARY WOOD ALLEN.

CONFIDENTIAL TALKS

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERY EXPLAINED.

We are taught in the book of Genesis that God created everything. After he had formed the world, brought light out of darkness and order out of chaos, after he had established the firmament, set bounds for the seas and sufficiently prepared the dry land, he said: "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself; and it was so. And God saw that it was good."

Then, after he had rolled away and condensed the dark clouds which filled the sky and had caused the sun, the moon and the stars to shine out, he said: "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the

earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales and every living creature, that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl, after his kind; and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth."

Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing and the beast of the earth, after his kind; and it was so."

Finally, God created man, in his own image; male and female created he them; and God said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good."

Did you ever stop to think of the significance of those phrases—"male and female," "whose seed is in itself," "be fruitful, and multiply and replenish," "after its kind" etc.? They are full of the deepest meaning, and they sound the key-note of these "Confidential Talks" with you.

No one knows just how God made the first pair (male and female) of any species of animal, or of plant life; but physiologists, and other careful students of nature, have learned the laws and methods by which each individual plant and animal has been produced since the first pair of each species came from the creative hand. All the offspring or "seed," of those first pairs, each species after its kind, are the result of a wonderful process of life-transmission, called *reproduction*; and as long ago as when Rome ruled the world, and Latin was the language of much of the world's science, men had discovered the fundamental law of reproduction, and had formulated it in the sentence, "*Omne vivum ex ovo*"—which means "all life is from the egg," or, "each individual life form is from an egg."

The most modern science finds it strictly true that every blade of grass, every flowering plant, every fish, reptile, bird or beast; every kitten, puppy, calf or colt; every baby elephant, and every human baby that comes into the world, develops from an egg. (Latin, ovum; plural, ova.) Every ovum is produced by an organ called an ovary; and every per

fect female, of whatever species—whether plant or animal—has one or more of these organs for producing ova. An ovum is an organized *germ* from which, under favoring circumstances, a new individual gradually develops.

All males, also, of whatever species, have special organs whose office it is to produce a fertilizing substance (called *pollen*, in vegetables; *semen*, in animals;) which, by uniting with the ova of females, sets up a process of development destined, eventually, to culminate in the production of new beings like the parents. Thus, centuries ago, science discovered the natural, universal law expressed in Bible phraseology by the terms, "male and female," "whose seed is in itself," "multiply and replenish," "after its kind," etc.

In the following pages I shall describe, somewhat in detail, the methods of reproducing,—beginning with the vegetable kingdom and tracing them in their marvelous modifications up to and through the various classes of animal life, including man.

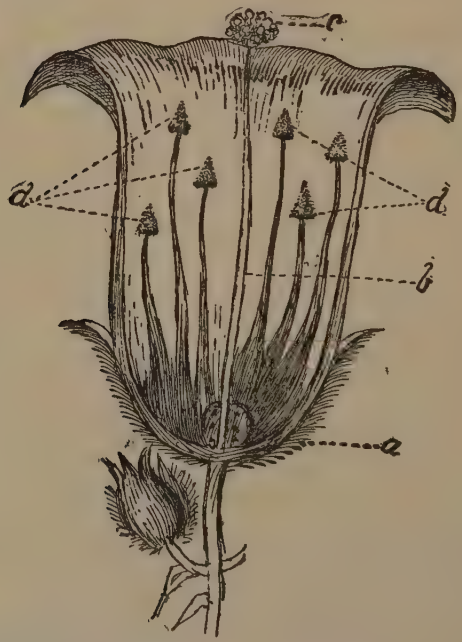
CHAPTER II.

REPRODUCTION AS EXHIBITED BY PLANTS.

Every girl is fond of flowers; indeed, almost every human being, regardless of sex or age, admires and enjoys them. What is more delightful, in form, in structure, in color or in odor, than the fragrant blossoms of some of our plants? Some of them are exquisite beyond our power to express. As we so often hear it remarked, with great intensity of expression, "they are *p-e-r-f-e-c-t-l-y b-e-a-u-t-i-f-u-l!*" But what are these beautiful flowers? They are simply the reproductive organs of plants. They are the ingeniously contrived organs which obey, though unconsciously, the command that God has impressed upon all life, "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."

Let us study this matter somewhat carefully, and see how some plants do this. Below is a cut representing a blossom resembling the

common morning glory. It contains both sets of organs—the male and the female—in each blossom; and therefore illustrates, in a sim ple way, the processes of germ-formation and fertilization.



The above blossom is represented as cut down through the middle, disclosing in profile

the essential parts of the reproductive organs, parts which nature so carefully protects by the surrounding calyx and corolla. If you happen to be studying this subject when such plants are in bloom, it would be well to get a blossom and examine it in connection with the cut and text.

You notice attached to the inner side of the bottom of the flower a rounded pod (a) represented as containing a few small, spherical bodies. This pod is the *ovary*, and the little bodies within it are the *ovules*, or seeds. Extending from this ovary toward the top of the cup-shaped blossom is a tube (b) called the *style*, which terminates in a spongy expansion (c) called the *stigma*. This ovary with its ovules, together with the style and the stigma, constitute the female organs of the plant. It is the office of the ovary to produce and protect the ovules. It is the office of the stigma and the style to receive and conduct to each ovule in the ovary, a fertilizing substance, called pollen, which is produced and thrown off by the male organs (d) called anthers. If each of the ovules is perfect, and if it receives a proper quantity of healthy pollen

from the anthers, through the style, then the ovule thus fertilized, if matured and placed under proper conditions, will devolop into another plant like the parent that produced it. Thus the first plant, whose seed developed within itself, produced several other plants of the same species. The second generation produced a third; and so the multiplication has proceeded from the first morning-glory that God made till the present time; and thus will it continue so long as He has ordained that morning glories shall exist upon the earth.

Many other species of plants, besides this one that I have described, bear blossoms that contain both the male and the female organs; but this particular arrangement is not found in all plants. The flowers of many species of vegetation contain but one set of organs, i. e., each blossom is either male or female—a father or a mother blossom. In some cases the different sexes grow closely together, on the same branch of a plant or tree; in other cases they are found only on separate branches, while in certain species they are produced only on separate trees, and those trees may be widely distant from one another. The willow and

the poplar are examples of the last sort, while our common Indian corn is an interesting example of the kind that produces, on the same stalk, blossoms of distinct sex. With corn, the "tassels" are the clusters of male blossoms, and the ears (ovaries), with their husks and protruding threads of "silk," constitute the female organs. In the case of the corn, gravitation and the winds scatter the pollen from the tassels upon the silk, and, traveling down each filament of silk, the pollen reaches each kernel of corn (ovule) and fertilizes it. In most cases where the sexes are in different-blossoms the pollen is conveyed from the male to the female blossom by bees and other honey-gathering insects. These collectors of honey do not intentionally carry the pollen for the purposes of fertilization—it is an inevitable incident of their daily life; for whenever an insect alights in the cup of a male flower it necessarily becomes dusted with the pollen, and then, when it happens to alight on a female flower and squeezes down into the cup after honey, it inevitably rubs off some of the pollen; and this pollen, thus transferred, penetrates the stigma and traverses the style till it reaches the ovules in the ovary.

Such is the plan by which plant life is perpetuated on the earth. Each species has its own special modification of this general plan; no two species of plant-blossoms being exactly alike in size, form, color or arrangement of parts. In some cases the flower is beautiful and complex in structure, and of delightful fragrance; in other cases it is plain, simple, and odorless. Indeed a few plants produce no conspicuous flowers; and hence they differ somewhat in the details of fertilization. But they all have reproductive organs in some form, and their seeds are produced and fertilized essentially as I have described—and in such abundance that vegetation sprouts and grows in endless profusion all about us.

Is it not wonderful that all of this rapidly dying vegetation is thus ever renewed and increased through having its "seed within itself?" Is it not remarkable that plants are constituted "male and female"—father plants and mother plants—each having its special organs and functions so marvelously adapted for the purpose of self propagation? But to how few has it ever occurred that the beautiful, fragrant blossoms which we so greatly admire,

the flowers which we so carefully cultivate and gather for bouquets, with which to ornament the hair, the dress, the rooms; or which we toss so generously to the graduating friend or the charming prima donna; or with which we decorate the happy bride to-day and lay on the casket of a deceased friend to-morrow; to how few has it occurred that these exquisite flowers are but the reproductive organs of plants? But such is the simple fact; and, surely, there is nothing inherently or necessarily indelicate or unclean about it; nothing unworthy of intelligent and scientific attention; nothing naturally offensive or dangerous to genuine purity and true modesty. On the other hand, reproduction,—that is, the transmission and perpetuation of life,—is one of the most sacred and important subjects that can command the attention of mankind. It is only because of our stupid ignorance, our sinfulness and our degradation that it has come to be regarded as other than pure and holy. Surely, we must consider as sacred every marvelous plan of God which he has revealed to us in the creation and management of his creatures. Then let no pure girl or woman esteem the sub-

ject indelicate; let no one blush except at unwise ignorance concerning these things, or because of the abuse and debasement of them.

CHAPTER III.

THE REPRODUCTION OF INVERTEBRATE ANIMALS.

Animals differ from vegetables chiefly in having a nervous system which renders them capable of feeling the contact of other bodies, and of recognizing things by means of four other special senses—sight, hearing, smelling and tasting. Mankind can also think and will with reference to things. By means of our special senses and our superior mental power, we are able to observe and understand quite fully and satisfactorily the laws and methods of reproduction as seen not only in plants, but also as exhibited throughout the animal kingdom; and we find them essentially the same in both. We see that of animals it is as true as of plants, that "male and female created he them," and that each and every form of life is from an egg.

It would be easy to suggest other methods of keeping up the population of the world;

but the all-wise Creator "in the beginning" established, and ever carefully follows, the one general law or method—"*all life from an egg*" —modifying and adapting the details to the various needs and conveniences of each species of life that he created. Let us trace the unfolding of the method from some of the lower forms of animal life up to mankind. In doing so we shall behold exhibitions of wisdom and skill even more striking than those which are found in the vegetable world.

Among the lower forms of animal life are many species created on the same plan as that exhibited by the morning-glory; i. e., each individual animal, like each individual blossom, contains both male and female organs. Take the oyster for example: it is protected by a heavy shell, and often the shells of many are cemented together into a solid aggregation or mass. The individuals cannot leave their shells and they cannot move them about on their bodies from place to place. Under such circumstances, had they been created, individually, either male *or* female, the former could not have reached the latter to impregnate the eggs which she might produce. Hence, with

the oyster, and with some other low and fixed forms of animal life, each individual is hermaphrodite; i. e., it is of *both* sexes, male *and* female in one body; hence it must impregnate its own ova before expelling them. The egg, being fertilized while still within the ovary, is cast off from its parent, drifts away in the water till it comes in contact with a rock, shell or other hard substance, to which it adheres and immediately sets about secreting its shell—a garment which proves to be at once its protector and its prison.

But let us leave the low, plant-like, molluscan forms of life, and study the methods as exhibited by most insects. "Male and female created he them;" but each individual is distinct in sex. The female has ovaries in which she produces ova. The male has organs which produce semen. The eggs of the female move from the ovaries into a special sack or channel called the womb. This is so conveniently located that when the male seeks the female, and secures proper contact, he can deposit in the womb the fertilizing substance, called semen. Each ovum that receives a portion of this semen becomes impregnated thereby and

is thus rendered capable of developing into a creature of the same species as the parent. In plants the process of germ-union is generally called *fertilization*; in animals, *impregnation.*

After this impregnation of the ova, the female, guided by an unerring instinct, deposits them in some substance that will serve a double purpose· First, it must protect the eggs from destructive agents; and second, it must furnish food for the young insects after they shall hatch out. You may have noticed that the fly deposits its eggs in dead flesh, on which the young, when hatched, may feed and grow. Some insects deposit their eggs in the earth, and the young, on hatching, eat the organic matter which, to some extent, is always mixed with the earth. Some bore into the bark or leaves of plants to deposit their eggs, and the young feed on the tender parts of the plant in which they find themselves. The father and mother insects never see their children, for death claims the parents soon after they have performed the reproductive act. In this respect insects are like the flowers—the fathers and mothers fade and die soon after the ovules are fertilized. Their offspring are born orphans.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PROPAGATION OF FISHES, BIRDS AND MARSUPIALS.

Let us now proceed to a brief description of the methods exhibited by vertebrates—i. e. animals having a spinal column and a bony skeleton—and let us begin with the lowest class of vertebrates, the fishes.

The females have very large ovaries, and many species produce, each year, an astonishing number of eggs. Single *cods* have been found to contain as high as from sixteen to twenty million of eggs at one time. Not all species of fish produce as many eggs as that every season; but they all produce a great number. In order that even a large percentage of the vast numbers of eggs produced may easily become impregnated, a curious provision is made. You have all heard of "schools" of fish, and know that it means droves or crowds of them. You are probably aware that certain

species,—like cod, mackerel, etc.—move about in immense schools, thousands or millions of them crowding together so closely that sometimes it is difficult for them to move at all. During certain seasons of the year these vast schools of fish come from the deep and open sea up into the estuaries, bays and rivers, or upon the "banks," where the water is comparatively shallow, and there they "spawn"—that is, the females deposit their eggs and the males impregnate them. Each female expels from her body the ova she has slowly developed during the year. They are held together and floated in a slimy, albuminous substance similar to the white of a hen's egg. This substance spreads out in the water in a thin sheet, thus exposing a large amount of this albuminous surface, holding its scattered millions of eggs.* The eggs being thus exposed in the water, the males swim along over them and expel upon them a substance resembling that which was discharged by the females; but instead of containing eggs, this male fluid (semen) contains

* To get a clear idea of the manner in which this substance spreads out in the water, break a hen's egg and pour its contents into a dish of water, and notice how the white of the egg spreads out in a thin sheet, still holding the yolk in its mucilaginous grasp. This yolk is held by the white of the egg very much as the eggs of fishes are held by the white substance accompanying them.

minute organisms, called *spermatozoa*, which come in contact with and penetrate the ova, thus impregnating them. Being fertilized, the eggs undergo rapid evolutions and, in a few days or weeks, hatch out lively little fishes of the same species as their parents. Thus do fish multiply, "after their kind," in the waters. You notice that with fishes the impregnation occurs outside of the body of both parents, and that the eggs and the young that hatch from them are left without care from the parents;—so that fish, like insects, are born and grow up, practically, as orphans.

Next let us notice how birds perform the same function. The females produce eggs; the males produce semen; and, as we saw is the rule with insects, the eggs are impregnated while yet within the body of the female. This result is secured by a physical contact, called copulation, whereby the semen of the male is deposited in the oviducts (womb) of the female. Being thus impregnated, the eggs increase in size by a process of growth, and, when of proper size, they are enveloped in a protecting shell and then expelled from the body ("laid") in a nest which the parents carefully

prepare before hand. When a sufficient number of eggs has been deposited in the nest, the female begins the process of incubation;—i. e. she "sets" upon, or "hovers," the eggs for a time, imparting to them the warmth of her body, and turning them frequently, till at last are completed the various changes which convert the contents of each egg into a baby-bird of the same species as the parents. After breaking and escaping from the shell, the young birds need to be carefully fed and guarded by the parents for some time before they are able to take care of themselves. You must have observed that the food of young birds is only such material as the parents gather and bring to them, or such as they lead them to. No milk, or other form of nourishment, is furnished from within the mother's body, as is the case with the higher forms of life.

The next grade of animal life, higher than birds, embraces the marsupials. In this class the females have a sack, or pocket, on the abodmen, in which they shelter and carry their young. Marsupials are largest and most abundant in Australia. The kangaroo is the

largest known animal of this class. In America, the only well known marsupial is the opossum. Impregnation of the egg of these animals occurs within the womb of the female, through proper contact with the male. But, instead of being surrounded with a shell, expelled from the body into a nest and there incubated, as is the case with birds, the eggs of the marsupial are "hatched" while yet within the body of the mother, and while still quite small, imperfect and feeble, the young are expelled from the mother's womb, and are immediately taken, by her fore-paw, and placed in the sack (*marsupium*) upon her abdomen. In this sack the mouth of each wee little one becomes attached and glued to a teat or nipple, and, by contraction of muscles about the nipples, a secretion somewhat similar to milk is forced into the little bodies, which thereby grow in size and strength till, by and by, they become loosened from the nipple (as ripe fruit drops from the bough) and climb out of the maternal pocket to see and enjoy the world. But for some time yet they run to the mother's marsupium for protection, nourishment, rest and transportation. Finally, however,

they are weaned, and the mother's "baby basket" becomes shrunken and useless till another set of little ones is produced and transferred to it for safe keeping and development.

CHAPTER V.

THE PROCESS AS EXHIBITED BY MAMMALS.

The most elaborate and remarkable of all exhibitions of the reproductive processes is seen in the class of animals called mammals. The word is derived from the Latin, *mammae*, which means breast or udder. The term is applied to all animals that nurse or suckle their young—i. e., nourish them with milk, which is secreted by certain glands variously called breast, udder, bag, etc. Our English word ma-ma (sometimes contracted to ma) is said to be but the old Latin word *mamma*, meaning breast; hence, perhaps, the cry for "ma-ma" was originally a cry of hunger, a call for food. With the mammal, as with the marsupial, impregnation of the ovum occurs within the body of the female; but the development of the young within the mother is carried much farther than in any instance I have hitherto described. Instead of being

expelled from the mother in the form of an egg, as is the case with birds, or as very imperfect, helpless, senseless little embryo animal forms, as is the case with marsupials, the eggs of mammals are hatched in the womb of the mother. The young creatures thus hatched are retained within the womb for weeks or months, being constantly nourished and built up by her own blood,—which, by a wondrous vital connection, is caused to circulate through the offspring—till they acquire considerable size and strength. Then they are expelled from the mother, by a process called birth, and are subsequently nursed at the breast till they become sufficiently large and strong to eat such food as their parents use. The length of time required for a sufficient development of the mammalian young within the womb of the mother ranges all the way from two or three weeks to a year or more. The young of the horse are about twelve months within the mother's womb before birth occurs. Human babies remain about nine months in the womb before they are born.

And now, my young reader, if you never knew before, you must by this time under-

stand what is meant by being "born." You now know that the dear little babies that come to our homes are not brought there by angels, or by storks, or by doctors. They are not found in the woods, or in hollow stumps, or in bird's nests, or in hay-mows. They develop within the body of a mother; are bone of her bone, blood of her blood—aye, they are a part of her very life. This long and intimate physical connection and anxious anticipation explains why the mother loves her child so dearly, cares for it so tenderly, and why, if need be, she will sacrifice for it her very life. These matters are wonderfully important; but we can see good reasons why little boys and girls are not told all about them. In the first place, it requires a mind of some maturity to understand even the simple, outline facts that I have been stating; and, besides, little folks have no practical use for information on these subjects. There are many things that children do not need to know, and would better not know, till they can quite fully comprehend and appreciate them. But as soon as one can clearly understand the facts, and their significance, secrecy is no longer wise.

In explaining to you sex and sex-relations, with the general method of perpetuating life upon the earth, I have simply unfolded before you God's universal plan for multiplying and replenishing life upon the earth; the plan which he decided upon to the exclusion of all others; the plan by which he determined to bring into this world all creatures, during all time—whether those creatures be plants or animals, whether as low in the scale of being as a pestiferous garden weed, or as high as immortal *man*. This is the method by which you were brought into this world; the method by which your father and mother came; and so of their ancestors—back to Adam. This is the method by which your children must come (if you are to marry and have children), and so of their offspring, and theirs, and theirs, down to the last human child that shall come upon the earth. You can not regard this matter in any other than a pure and sacred light when you contemplate the fact that you, your self, during the first nine months of your individual life, reposed, unconsciously growing, within the womb of your mother, receiving from her the best of her heart's blood, being

built up by the food that she ate and elaborated for you, receiving from her those peculiar influences and impressions which inevitably determined, to a large extent, your form, features, temperament and disposition—your physical, mental and moral character. Surely if there is anything vulgar about this subject, it originates in the heart of the one who thinks so—not in the nature of the processes. It ever has been, and always will be true, that "to the pure all things are pure."

CHAPTER VI.

THE REPRODUCTIVE ORGANS OF THE HUMAN FEMALE.

In the preceding chapters I have called your attention to the universal and only method ordained of God for multiplying life upon the earth. I have reminded you that mankind was created "male and female," and have told you that every perfect female has ovaries in which ova are produced, and a womb in which these ova may become impregnated and developed into a living child, ready to be born into the world. I have also called your attention to the fact that, during many months after its birth the child naturally procures its food from the breast of the mother. I now propose to locate and describe the reproductive, or sexual, organs.

The breasts, two in number, are placed on the upper and front part of the thorax—one on each side of the median line. All young

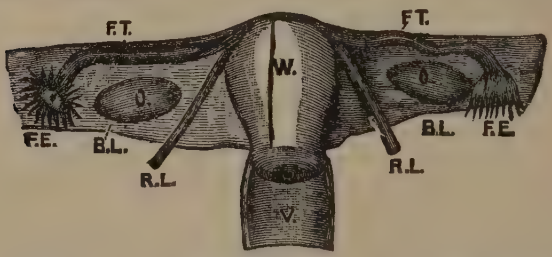
women are so familiar with their location and appearance that no detailed description is necessary.

The womb (by the doctors usually called the *uterus*) is situated in the lower part of the abdominal cavity; it is below the intestines, behind the bladder and in front of the rectum.

The ovaries, two in number, are located one on each side of the womb, and about one inch from it. The womb and the ovaries are held in place by being clasped between the layers of a broad ligament which extends across the pelvic cavity and is attached to the bones which form its walls, very much as a banner is supended by ropes which extend from building to building, across a street. The following cut will make clear to you the relative position of these parts, and their relation to other organs in the lower part of the abdominal cavity, a region that is usually called the *pelvic cavity*, because the bones forming its walls constitute the *pelvis*.

The cut exhibits, as if removed from the body and held up for convenient inspection, the uterus, the ovaries, the broad ligaments, the round ligaments, the Fallopian tubes and

a part of the vagina. The broad ligament is a sheet of tough membrane which holds between its two layers the greater part of the other organs named. In the cut, on the left side,



W. Womb F. T. Fallopian Tubes B. L. Broad Ligament
V. Vaginia F. E. Fringed ends R. L. Round Ligament
O. O. Ovaries of Fallopian Tubes

this broad ligament is represented in outline only, in order that the other parts may be displayed more clearly than they are on the side where they are represented as between the folds of the membrane. The natural, fully developed uterus is about three inches long, two inches wide at the top, where the Fallopian tubes join it, and a little more than an inch in thickness. The ovaries are about the size and shape of almond meats. Each Fallopian tube, as you see represented in the cut, terminates in a free and fringed extremity; they

are hollow; i. e. beginning in an opening down in the midst of the fringed end, a channel extends clear through to the cavity of the womb, so that a stiff horse hair might be passed through each Fallopian tube from its fimbriated extremity into the uterus, thence onward through its cavity into the vagina—and still onward out of the body.

Now imagine these organs, which we have seen thus represented by themselves, outside of the body, put back in their proper place in the pelvic cavity under the intestines, between the bladder and the rectum, with the broad ligaments extending to the side walls of the pelvis and firmly attached thereto. In a subsequent chapter I shall call your attention to the fact that the small intestines rest directly upon the womb, and the stomach, liver, pancreas and spleen directly upon the small intestines, thus, in a measure, loading the womb with the other abdominal viscera.

CHAPTER VII.

THE AGE OF PUBERTY--PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CHANGES.

The sexual organs of the female—the breasts, ovaries, Fallopian tubes, womb and vagina, described in the preceding chapter—are small and entirely inactive at the birth of every girl, and they should continue so for at least twelve or thirteen years (better if it be fourteen or fifteen) before they begin to develop perceptibly and to exhibit their special activity. For these twelve or more years every girl of ideal inherited tendencies, if of right habits and under proper influences, might safely be left in ignorance of the fact that she has organs of reproduction. They are of no actual use to her, and if she be in sound condition, she can be of no special service to them. But about the time she reaches her "teens," if normally developed and in the enjoyment of average

health, the sexual organs begin to grow larger and to show signs of special activity. This is the most interesting, and at the same time the most critical, period of a girl's life; for now, within a year or two, is to be determined that most important question—whether she is or is not to become a beautiful, attractive, useful and happy woman. One year now may determine the essential history of a life, whether it shall be a womanly success or a miserable failure. So, I am sure you will want to follow me carefully as I trace for you your physical history through those critical months, *the age of puberty.*

Hitherto you have been "only a little girl;" you have been somewhat careless and giddy, no doubt,—possibly selfish and willful; but you have been socially safe, in a natural harbor. Now, whether you will or not, you must weigh anchor and leave this comparatively safe harbor of girlhood, to make your voyage on the broad ocean of womanhood, with its varied opportunities, joys and responsibilities. Perhaps the first signs of starting will be feelings of unusual weariness, or of mental indifference to passing events; you suffer from feelings of

bashfulness and a desire to avoid company; if you do not wish to be entirely alone, you want only the company of a certain playmate of yours, some one girl friend, to whom you have become devotedly attached. In her company you can pleasantly spend hour after hour and day after day, talking or reading about matters which hitherto have been of but little interest to you. Stories of love and romance now captivate and thrill you as never before. Your friends notice that you are less observant and more reflective than formerly, absent-minded and negligent of little duties, perhaps. It may be remarked that you are getting nervous and notional; that you appear to care less for your parents than has been your custom, desiring only the company and confidence of that special young mate to whom I just referred. You feel ill at ease, awkward and, at times, almost inclined to wonder who you are, and why people seem so changed. Somehow life does not seem just as it used to, and occasionally you feel like having "*a good cry about it.*"

While you are experiencing these mental changes, it will be noticed and remarked by

others that your body is growing quite rapidly that you are filling out in your limbs and changing somewhat in shape. Fatty tissue is accumulating under the skin, giving a smoother and more graceful outline to the body, particularly to the limbs. Your neck is elongating and becoming more delicate in outline; your shoulder-blades are crowding backward and downward; your chest is filling out; the breasts are growing larger; your hips are expanding rapidly, and soon will become broader than your shoulders, and your limbs are rounded, full, and gracefully tapering. The skin now loses some of it roughness and becomes thinner and fairer; your cheeks begin to grow ruddy; your lips are fuller, more delicate in curve and more graceful in expression; your eyes are brighter and more expressive—and how they do "snap," sometimes; your hair is longer and more luxuriant, and your voice is richer, more tender, more sympathetic and more musical. As these changes progress you begin increasingly to enjoy the world again, and to feel a keener interest in the social and moral questions and movements that agitate it. Your sympathies for all forms

of life enlarge and quicken, and, probably, your religious nature is stirred as never before. These changes all express the fact—indeed, they depend upon the fact—that your sexual organs are developing and are making you *a woman.* You are blossoming into life, expanding into womanhood.

If the sexual organs do not develop, fully and normally, then the other glorious physical mental and moral changes that I have indicated will not take place. But if the sexual organs *do* develop, naturally and completely, then the charming general unfoldings which I have named are sure to take place, and the splendid beauties of the "sweet sixteen" period become attractions which neither true manhood nor appreciative womanhood can resist. You become,

"A perfect woman, nobly planned
To warn, to comfort and command;
And yet a spirit, still and bright,
With something of an angel light."

As a rule, to which there are but few exceptions in the north temperate zone, somewhere between the twelfth and eighteenth year, (usu-

ally between the fourteenth and sixteenth) every normal girl more or less perfectly passes through such changes, and becomes a fertile woman. The time required for the change varies all the way from a few months to two or more years. It is true that not all can become equally beautiful, attractive, winsome and influential. Many circumstances interfere with perfection of development. The daughters in some families may never hope to enjoy any great reputation for personal charms; it is frequently true that beauty is not a family trait; but it is certain that personal attractions, mental power, physical efficiency and moral character in this world depend largely upon the possession and proper development of the organs of reproduction. However little of beauty one may have while possessing fully matured sex organs, she would have far less without them. Many women, being properly *sexed*—though they may not be regarded as beautiful, are yet very attractive, lovable and influential.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUBJECTIVE SYMPTOMS OF PUBERTY.

Besides these varied changes, apparent to every one, changes that occur in your body and mind, making of you a woman among women, a being admired and courted by men, there are other changes and phenomena, experienced and observed by yourself alone, of which you will say but little to any one else, except as you most properly consult your mother or confidential adviser or, as sometimes becomes necessary, your family physician.

Soon after you began to experience the coyness or bashfulness, the desire to be more alone than had been your custom, (of which I spoke in the preceeding chapter) you probably felt unusual symptoms in your back, or loins, or legs, or head, or perhaps, in all of them. Quite likely you experienced wandering pains and shifting aches, heaviness in the

small of the back, a sort of pressure in the region of the ovaries, flushings of the face, chills along the spine, and a great many little "bad feelings." Nearly all girls who are brought up according to the customs of our modern civilization experience such sensations to some extent—some but very slightly, others to a degree amounting to positive torture and serious sickness. In time it comes about that, accompanying or following such disturbances as I have indicated, there is a discharge of mucus from the vagina. This discharge increases in quantity and is soon tinged with blood, which becomes more and more abundant till, in a day or two, the fluid appears to be nearly clear blood. This bloody discharge comes from the mucous lining of the womb, and is called *menstrual fluid.* The act is called menstruation, from *mensis,* a month; because when the discharge becomes established as a habit, it occurs about once a lunar month. In some cases it occurs as regularly as the moon or the calendar months come and go. In other cases it occurs very irregularly, at times leaving an interval of only a few days between two menstruations,

and again omitting the act for several months. In many cases it takes a year or more for a young woman to become settled into trustworthy regularity; some women never become perfectly "regular." Some always experience considerable local pain and general disturbance; others hardly ever know, by their feelings, that menstruation is occurring. The length of time occupied by each menstrual period ranges from three to seven days, rarely extending beyond the latter number unless there is some diseased condition.

Every young woman should freely consult her mother, or whatever adult woman may be her confidential counselor, for information and advice in these matters. Do not allow yourself to suffer from anxieties, doubts and fears. Learn at once what you should habitually do, or avoid doing, for your best good, present and future. Your health, happiness and success in life may depend upon the character of your menstrual habit. If you have no mother or proper confidant to whom you can go for advice—as, for example, when you are away from home, visiting or traveling—fortunately there are now many educated and trustworthy physi-

cians of your own sex to whom you may properly and safely apply for counsel in such matters. You may thereby avoid the strain upon those feelings of delicacy which, very naturally, (though unnecessarily,) you might experience in calling upon a physician of the opposite sex.

If you are at a boarding school or seminary, and there is no resident physician in the family, either the *preceptress* or the *matron* will gladly instruct you; and, as a rule, they are quite competent to do so. Call on them confidently and frankly. Never consult your mates or other young persons for advice in these matters. They may have been erroneously informed—if, indeed, they be informed at all; or their experience may have been unusual; or their minds may have been filled with superstitious and hysteria-breeding ideas. Too many "smart" young misses as well as ignorant adult people "know" a great deal that is *not true.* They are dangerous guides for those who are at a critical period of life, and in need of helpful truth and reasonable advice. Thank God for the good, sensible mothers and for the doctors and teachers of

your own sex, to whom you may apply. Call upon them promptly for the information which their experience and love can wisely give you.

It is well for you to remember that various terms are employed to designate this function, or process which we are considering. Physicians usually speak of it as the *menses*, or the *menstrual function*. The phrase "catamenial flow "is also much used. "Period", "monthly period", "courses", "monthly courses", are terms also used to express it. Sometimes it is spoken of as, "the monthly sickness"—and with not a few it is indeed a sickness. In many communities the condition is indicated by the term "unwell;" in fact it has come about in most places that the use of this word is quite largely restricted to indicating the menstrual condition. Possibly it is best, in view of this fact, that any one who is suffering from indisposition resulting from anything else than menstruation, should be spoken of as sick, ill, ailing, indisposed or "under the weather"—anything but "unwell," because, unfortunately, this word is now so largely monopolized by women to express their special monthly condition. But many men and some

women in our common society are not aware of this specific use of the word, and are not surprised or embarrassed by hearing any one use it in speaking of other conditions. I think it would be well if all would abandon the restricted use of the word; but, as many will not do so, you must be governed by the custom of the community in which you live.

The important facts to be remembered are: *first*, that every female who comes to womanhood menstruates, with more or less regularity, and also with more or less of suffering or inconvenience; *second*, that this function has most wonderful significance and influence; and *third*, that it must not be arrested or interfered with if one desires good health.

CHAPTER IX.

SIGNIFICANCE OF OVULATION AND MENSTRUATION.

The remarkable significance of menstruation, spoken of in the preceding chapter, is that the woman who performs it has become "fruitful." She is now capable of developing offspring "after her kind." She is producing and periodically expelling the ovum, which, if met in the womb by male semen, remains there and develops into the living child. Each menstrual act is evidence that another ovum has ripened in the ovary, and is on its way to the "nest," (womb,) ready, if fertilized, to hatch and develop into a human being, with all its possibilities. The maturing and casting off of this ovum is called *ovulation.* It is this ovulation which seems to produce the sensitiveness of nerve, the congestion and the various disturbances, described in the previous chapter as characterizing menstruation. At any rate, ovulation and menstruation are so

nearly simultaneous that the former appears to cause the latter. It is, however, of interest to note that a few women who never, perceptibly, menstruate—i. e. who never discover any bloody discharge or suffer from any of the unpleasant symptoms heretofore described—do ovulate; and their ova, being impregnated, develop and produce healthy children. Most women among uncivilized races, and many laboring women among European nations, menstruate but very little, and seldom suffer discomfort from it.

It is the belief of many physiologists that menstruation, especially *painful* menstruation, has come to be the habit of civilized, sedentary women, as a consequence of unnatural and unhealthful modes of living, including various social and solitary abuses of the reproductive organs. These unhealthy customs and abuses have steadily intensified their punishments as generations have succeeded one another, till now, through accumulated inheritance, women are suffering most sad and painful penalties, as a result of the follies of their ancestors. In a future volume, which I hope sometime to prepare especially for married people,

I intend to speak of this matter at some length; but that discussion will be for adult minds. The only point of practical value to you for whom this book is written is this:—the more perfect the general health, and the more complete the general life of any woman, the less of inconvenience and discomfort she will experience from her menses—the more certain will she be to ovulate healthfully and with comparatively little pain.

It is of interest to notice how the ovum, when ripened and cast out by the ovary, is conducted to the womb. Turning to the cut on page 40 you will observe that each Fallopian tube terminates in a free, fingered extremity, which can move about as freely as your hand and fingers move upon your wrist. When an ovum is matured and ready for fertilization, it burrows its way to the surface of the ovary and would drop into the pelvic cavity, like a ripened seed from a ruptured pod, did not this fingered extremity of the Fallopian tube reach around and seize it, much as you reach up to your mouth with your hand and take the cherry pit that is brought to your lips ready for ejection. The fingers of a Fallopian tube, having

seized an ovum, close around it and guide it into the tube, along the channel of which it is carried forward to the womb, where it lingers for several days. Finally, however, if not impregnated, it is thrown off from the womb and makes room for another ovum, which comes the next month in the same manner. The preceding descriptions have prepared you to understand that if an ovum, while in a Fallopian tube, or while lingering in the womb, meets the fertilizing substance of the male, it is arrested in its onward journey and, becoming attached to the walls of the womb, at once begins to develop into a child, the womb expanding to make room for it as it grows.

In the next chapters I shall ask your attention to some of the dangers that many girls confront at this period, *the threshold of womanhood*—influences and obstacles which prevent them from developing into beautiful, healthful and happy states of physical perfection; forces which overcome good conditions that have once been established. But by good physical conditions, be it remembered, I do not mean simply an average size of body, or a form that can easily be drawn into fashionable shapes,

or having a pretty face, or even a condition of health so good that you are not often disabled by sickness. I *do* mean such size, form, features, health, symmetry, gracefulness and balance of body, mind and soul as shall make you a well-spring of pleasure to all who come into your presence—a beloved daughter, an honored wife a joyous, mother, an inspiring neighbor, a highly esteemed citizen, a trusted friend. All this is not only possible, it is inevitable, with the ideal woman—one who is well born, normally developed and properly trained.

CHAPTER X.

SOME OBSTACLES TO HEALTHFUL DEVELOPMENT.

The *first* dangerous obstacle that stands in the way of many girls and prevents them from ever becoming ideal women is this: they have not inherited from their parents the normal conditions and tendencies which render ideal development possible. Unfortunate hereditary traits—physical, mental and moral—often stand so obstinately across the pathway of development as to prevent a healthful and pleasurable unfolding of body, mind and character. Some girls are born incapable of being anything but dwarfs, cripples or invalids; it is utterly impossible for them to develop into ideal women. Others, while not quite so unfortunate as that, are, nevertheless, born with such imperfect bodies, or such weak constitutions, that they may not hope to attain anything like perfection. Incurable defects are the inherited mis-

fortunes of many, many children. But probably most girls who read these words are so fortunately born that, if the necessary training and conditions follow, they may become at least useful and, perhaps, highly influential and charming women. Much depends upon inheritance; but, still, most remarkable corrective results may be secured by wise training. Many inherited evil tendencies may be quite fully overcome by judicious care and direction after one is started in this life.

The *second* danger is that during infancy, as well as later, the girl may not receive proper nourishment. It is at least unfortunate that any child must be "brought up on the bottle." No other "food for infants" can equal the milk that nature produces (or should produce) in the breasts of a healthy mother; and any child that does not have healthy mother's milk during the first year of its life is deprived of a God-ordained birth-right. Proper food, properly taken, constitutes the foundation of all human attainment. The bottle, with its cow's milk, for nursing children, is a misfortune, just as certainly as the bottle, with its ardent spirits, for adults, is a curse. But even after pass-

ing the bottle period, the food is often of a dangerous character. Too many young people have their digestion injured and disease implanted in the system through the use of improper food. Chapter XIII. is devoted to this subject.

A *third* source of danger is that because one is "a girl" she will be kept in doors most of the time and not be allowed to secure the necessary amount of muscular exercise in the open air and sunlight. This subject is so important that an entire chapter (XIV) is devoted to it.

A *fourth* danger is that unhealthful dress will add its debilitating and destroying work to the injuries resulting from unfortunate inheritance, defective nourishment and inactivity. As a rule, in this country, even infants are bandaged, swaddled and cramped too much. Mothers and nurses do not give them a sufficient chance to breathe and exercise and come into direct contact with the air. The tight bandages to which most children are subjected are relics of an era of ignorance and superstition which we of to-day ought not to tolerate. Reason says "*away at once and forever with*

infant's bandages and all tight clothing, for either old or young!" This subject will be discussed somewhat at length in chapter XV.

The dangerous influences, which I have mentioned thus far, viz: unfortunate inheritance, imperfect nutrition sedentary life and unreasonable clothing, are all largely in the hands of parents for direction and control during the habit-forming years. On fathers and mothers, together with their ancestors, rests the responsibility for pretty much all of the injury that is done previous to the years of puberty; for each child when it comes into the world is entirely ignorant and helpless in all of these matters, and of course must remain so until it shall have had time and opportunity to learn what is the right thing to do. During all these early years parents and teachers are surrounding each child with many and varied influences and are helping it to form a multitude of habits, from the effects of which, good or bad, it may never escape.

But you, my readers, who have come to the door-way of womanhood, and you who have already crossed the threshold, are old enough and ought to be sufficiently wise and independ-

ent, to correct at least a portion of the evil habits which may have been forced upon you. Even serious inherited tendencies may be at least partially corrected. It certainly is now within your power largely to determine what food you shall eat and how you shall take it; you can now, to a considerable extent, determine the healthfulness of your dress, for you may insist that your clothing shall be made so loose that you can breathe freely, and you can select sensible shoes, if you will. You can also arrange matters so that you shall have daily exercise in the open air and sunlight. Intelligent and conscientious attention to the three last named items will do much to overcome the ill effects of unfortunate inheritance and of early bad habits. Of course the preceding suggestions are not applicable to some of my readers; for not a few of you have been well born and well taught; and I trust you have already formed correct habits. But to those who have been less fortunate, I hope these hints may seem at least of sufficient value to excite lively interest in the remaining chapters.

For the details relating to general physiolo-

gy—food, digestion, respiration, circulation, exercise, bathing, etc.—I must refer you to the school text books on Physiology and Hygiene. But there are a few points in these topics which are of such special interest and importance to you, because of their bearing upon the reproductive sphere, that I shall present them, together with such other facts as, for obvious and sufficient reasons, are not touched upon in school books.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RESULTS OF CERTAIN CUSTOMS.

If you have carefully read the preceding chapters you have a general idea regarding the location and arrangement of the sexual organs in the pelvic cavity. If these organs always remain in their proper place and in normal conditions of activity, their own health and the general bodily health are almost certain to be good. But the organs are somewhat easily displaced, so easily, indeed, that many women suffer from displacements, and also from a variety of other diseases of the uterus and ovaries resulting from displacements. Let us see how this comes about. The pear shaped womb, in its natural position, stands on its smaller extremity, just behind the bladder, with its base extending a little above it. The lower extremity of the womb rests within and is attached to the vagina, which is a straight or slightly curved tube extending from the womb

to the surface of the body. It is through this vagina that the menstrual fluid escapes from the womb; through it, also, the child passes when it is born. This last fact suggests to you how flexible and expansible the vaginal walls must be and, hence, how easily they may yield to pressure from within and above. The vagina, in its normal, contracted condition, helps to hold the womb in its proper place. You will remember that I described the womb as being held in position by the broad and the round ligaments, which serve very much the same purpose as the ropes which suspend a banner across a street. But, just as the ropes which hold the banner may be made to sag by placing a heavy weight upon them, so the womb may be crowded down by pressure upon it from above. Now supposing that you put a corset or a tight waist, or tight bands of any sort, around the body above the hips and compress the body, you will see that the contents of the abdomen thus squeezed *must go somewhere.* The only direction in which they can move when the body is thus compressed, is downward; and in moving downward they must press upon the womb in the pelvis; and

sufficient pressure upon it will drive it down into the vagina, producing what is called prolapsus, or "falling of the womb." The womb never "falls" because of any fault or imperfection in God's work. It is forced down by conduct resulting from the ignorance or pride or folly of the woman who brings on the displacement. And yet I often hear women complain because God constructed their bodies so intricately and delicately—"so liable to get out of order." The Chinese who deform the feet of their girls do not blame God for having rendered it possible for them to do so. The Flathead Indian mother compresses the skull of her child and makes it look like an idiot; but no Indian blames the Great Spirit for it. Evidently, in some directions many of our so-called Christian women exhibit less sense than characterizes the heathen Chinese or the savage Indian. As a result of the compression of the body, by means of corsets etc. to which civilized women are so given, the womb, instead of being prolapsed, i. e., forced directly downward into the vagina, may be tipped over, or even bent upon itself, either forward or backward. Such displacements

often produce more discomfort and general distress than a simple prolapsus. If the womb is tipped backward it is called retroversion; if it is bent backward upon itself it is called retroflection. If tipped forward it is called anteversion, and if bent forward upon itself it is called anteflexion.

In all cases of uterine displacements the rectum is crowded upon and its functions are interfered with; or the bladder is pressed and irritated and its functions embarrassed. Usually both rectum and bladder are injured. In all cases of unnatural pressure upon the womb, or displacement of it, nerve irritation is produced which results in "bearing down" pains, "pressure" pains, back aches, pains and aches of all sorts, not only in the pelvis but, by what is called sympathetic or reflex suffering, in places remote from the displaced organs. Leucorrhoea is quite sure to result, and ulceration of the neck of the womb is very common. A long train of serious evils must follow in the wake of bad habits in dress. Under such treatment of the sexual organs as I have indicated they cannot develop perfectly, and hence they can not help on the physical beauty, attract-

iveness, efficiency and perfection described in chapter VII. Could you, my dear reader, be made to understand and feel this matter as the medical profession see it, could you comprehend the influence on yourself and on posterity as they do, could you realize the condition of the legions of women who disclose the facts of their sufferings, fears and dangers to the great army of physicians (now nearly one hundred thousand strong in the United States) you would surely determine to take proper care of your body. You would feed, clothe and train it so as to secure health, grace and strength. A recent writer on the care of the body says something like this: "The expected physical condition of the modern American woman over thirty years of age, is a sofa, a shawl, and the neuralgia." Such indeed is the case with a large number of our American women; and many of them reach the described conditions before they are thirty years of age. These things ought not so to be. And they need not be, if women will but intelligently and persistently set themselves to preventing or removing the causes of such calamities.

CHAPTER XII.

CAUSES AND DANGERS OF DEFECTIVE MENSTRUATION.

It not infrequently happens that life-long suffering is brought on by the accidental or artificial stoppage of the menses. Among the sad results of their cessation may be found inflammation, ulceration and displacement of the womb, leucorrhoea and other offensive discharges from the vagina, together with various nervous disorders,—especially hysteria and dyspepsia. Even paralysis, insanity and death sometimes result. All of these nervous diseases are possible because of the extensive and intimate connection and sympathy existing between the womb and the nervous system. So influential is the relation between the brain and the womb that excessive mental emotion, or intense excitement—such as violent anger, grief, fear, anxiety or protracted mental depression—sometimes arrests menstruation and

brings on serious chronic disease. Excessive fatigue, "taking cold," or getting the feet wet, may result in preventing or checking the flow.

The symptoms of this misfortune, aside from the stopping of the discharge, are somewhat various: but they are usually characterized by severe pain in the region of the womb, which may sometimes extend over the entire abdomen and down the thighs, even to the feet; it may also extend up the spine to the brain. Nausea, chills, fever and headache follow, and the unfortunate victim of this condition is obliged to go to bed, perhaps to remain there for some days. All girls or women whose nerves are especially sensitive and easily disturbed during menstruation, should at such times exercise great caution about attending parties, picnics, sleigh rides and excursions; and, if possible to avoid it, should not start on journeys during the earlier days of a menstrual period, for the reason that the excitment, fatigue and exposure incident to such efforts and pleasures are quite apt to arrest, or in some way to derange, this function. Many times, of course, it is very annoying to be obliged to stay at home while others are off for a "jolly good time;" but

often it is the safest, and hence the *best* thing to do—and every one should always and cheerfully do the safest and best thing. If you *must* be out at such times, see to it that you are sufficiently protected and that you "take it easy." Be particularly careful to keep the feet dry and warm, and always take with you extra wraps, ready for sudden changes in the weather, or for sitting in the shade. It is better to take extra clothing a hundred times when it proves useless, than to fail of having it at the one time when it is actually needed. Avoid lingering in cool draughts, standing on cold or damp ground, sitting on cold stone steps or on cold, damp seats of any kind. Many of these precautions seem trivial to young and inexperienced persons; but disregard of them has brought upon many a beautiful girl a life of misery and regret.

It is unfortunately true that sometimes silly girls employ artifical measures to delay or to check their menses, in order that they may the more conveniently attend some place of amusement. But the arrest or delay of the function, if secured, is purchased at a fearful price; because conditions far more troublesome

are brought on by checking the flow; and attendance at the place of amusement is, after all, usually prevented. Protracted ill health is quite certain to follow. You should never allow the natural function of menstruation to be interfered with by anything or for any purpose whatsoever. Thank God for it, and guard it well, for, to use the language of a scholarly physician and lucid writer, "it is the prime law of womanhood, and any attempt to check or interfere with its natural course is unmaidenly, unwomanly and unclean, besides being dangerous in proportion as it is successful." If any exposure or influence during menstruation arrests it, or even threatens to interfere with its progress, the wise thing to do is promptly to get into a warm bed and take a hot drink of some kind. It makes little difference what the drink is, so that it is hot and acceptable to the stomach. Ginger, pepper, cinnamon, peppermint, or any other aromatic herb makes good "tea" for such occasions. Hot bottles, or hot dry flannels, applied to the feet and legs, together with friction by the hands, are all helpful in re-establishing the desired condition. Hot sitz baths, if judiciously

taken, are excellent. If in such emergencies, you are not in the hands of competent friends of your own sex, let a physician be summoned at once.

"*This above all—to thine own self be true.*"

CHAPTER XIII.

NUTRITION, OR BODY-BUILDING.

Nutrition is the primary function of life. We all need food for at least four somewhat distinct purposes: first, that we may build up our bodies in healthful symmetry and strength, from feeble babyhood to adult size and power; second, for the purpose of keeping up a proper bodily temperature, a healthful degree of animal heat; third, for replacing repeatedly the tissues that are constantly being destroyed by the varied activities of the body in the performance of life's work; and fourth, for the development of the energy expended daily. These four purposes demand a good variety of healthful food material. They demand, also, that this food be taken at reasonable intervals, and in proper conditions.

There are some substances much used for food that are far from being healthful. They are objectionable not simply because they may

be difficult of digestion, but because they positively poison the blood, irritate the nerves and brain and enfeeble the muscles. Some of these harmful things look so nice and taste so good, and fashion has made their use so common, that most of us form habits of eating them regardless of the injury they do us. It is, perhaps, needless to state, that chalk, slate pencils, etc., are not good food; all intelligent people know that; and yet, not a few thoughtless misses get into the habit of eating them. Chocolates, caramels, and the various candies and confections so abundant now-a-days, are also unhealthful, especially if eaten between the regular meals or taken in considerable quantities at any time.

This is true because, in the first place, the human body does not need, and cannot use for any good purpose, so great a quantity of sugar as most of us habitually take, even at table with our daily food; and hence when a girl not only eats excessively of sugar with her regular food, but gluttonously feeds on candies between meals—however "pure" the candies may be, she overloads her system with sugar which readily ferments and does serious

harm. Furthermore, she injures herself by taking into her own system the many unknown but damaging substances which, for purposes of coloring, flavoring and cheapening, are mixed with the sugar of the candy. Though it would raise a great protesting cry from the young folks, and from not a few adults, if it should be seriously proposed to banish the candy stores and stop the manufacture of confectionery, yet it is undoubtedly true that the human race would be much better off without them. Most candies and confections are not only directly injurious, but they also prove indirectly harmful by changing normal appetites and tastes, deranging the processes of nutrition and unfitting one for selecting and enjoying the best food. Pies, cakes, and the various "goodies," of which we see such great quantities on many tables, are also poor stuff for building up strong, healthful bodies.

All highly sweetened articles of food, if taken in considerable quantities, interfere with perfect digestion, chiefly by inducing fermentation in the stomach and bowels. This fermentation results in the production of acids and sundry other substances which alter the

character of the various secretions of the body, causing decay of the teeth and producing many disorders along the food canal. Colics, headaches, neuralgias, lassitude, mental depression irritability of temper, and many other bad feelings, difficult to describe, and usually attributed to any cause except the right one, result from this sweet-meat plague.

In this country there is an abundance of good, plain, nutritious food; and every one should from infancy become habituated to the use of only such things as experience and science agree upon as unobjectionable. This matter is especially important to every girl as she nears the critical age of puberty, when changes and developments are more rapid and numerous than during any other period of life. An abundance of good blood for the expansion of the body and for the establishment of sound brain tissue and strong, steady nerves is now of the greatest importance. This is no time for babyishness, foolishness or bad habits of any sort. The girl who would be a perfect woman, or anything approaching to it, must comply with the God-ordained conditions on which her development depends; and the first

condition is, that the body shall daily receive a proper amount of nutritious, health-giving food, and that all injurious or useless articles be cheerfully and totally excluded from her diet. Good soups, porridges and mushes—made from any of the edible grains—bread and butter, rice, potatoes and other vegetables, milk, eggs, meats and fruits in their season—if properly prepared and served in a plain, cleanly condition and tasteful manner—are healthful food for any one; and the addition of pies and pastries, candies and sweetmeats, ices and iced drinks, tea, coffee, chocolate, pickles, spices, catsups, horseradish, mustard, and kindred "appetizers," is always injurious to some extent; though many people do not realize the fact until it is too late. A careful study of general physiology and hygiene, and a conscientious use of one's knowledge and judgment, usually lead to right habits and almost certainly secure satisfactory results in the matter of nutrition.

CHAPTER XIV.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE AND MUSCULAR DEVELOPMENT.

No microscope or other aid to study has revealed to the scientist any difference in the blood, the nerve or the muscle of the two sexes. Women are made of the same "dust of the earth" that men are composed of, and are subject to the same physical and sanitary laws. If man needs pure blood, so does woman; if man needs and enjoys strong nerve tissue, so does woman; if he needs, enjoys and is made efficient by the possession of strong and healthy muscle, the same is true of her. The man or the woman, the boy or the girl, who undertakes to live a sedentary, inactive life, without habitual exercise in the open air and exposure to the kindly light of the sun, will not secure the health, the comfort, the strength, the buoyancy, the grace or the beauty that God, through these agencies, has made possible for all of us. It is established, "in the nature of things"—

the law is written in all our members—that whoever will not engage, habitually, in physical activities, shall not enjoy fulness of health. Habitual exercise of the muscles is necessary, not simply for muscular strength, but for the harmonious activity of all the organs of the body. Moderate daily exercise quickens and perfects respiration, stimulates and accelerates the circulation of the blood, and aids the production and flow of all the other normal fluids of the body. Muscular activity prevents local congestions and constantly exercises a wholesome influence against nerve irritability and over-sensitiveness, thus helping to avoid the nervousness and hysteria so common with girls of sedentary and indolent habits. It is not necessary that girls become acrobats, athletes or champions at bat or oar; but it is highly important that they secure and maintain a symmetrical muscular development. A girl or woman with flabby, untrained muscles, cannot be so graceful, so efficient or so happy in any direction as she would be if her muscles were properly developed and trained. But perhaps the most marked benefit that comes to a young woman through physical exercise is

the good it secures to the sexual organs, protecting them from the nerve irritation and congestions, the irregular and imperfect functional activities to which sedentary and idle women are so prone; a condition so sadly common in the United States.

Active out-door life for women, especially for young, growing misses, should become *permanently fashionable.* It ought to be regarded as disreputable for young women to remain habitually in-doors, absorbed in sensational novels, entertaining pet dogs, engaged in "fancy work," or gossiping about "society," "beaux," "mashes," "matches" or any of the thousand and one belittling, unhealthful topics that so habitually occupy the time and minds of thousands of American misses. Sound, trustworthy, respectable minds unfold only in sound bodies; and sound bodies demand an abundance of exercise and exposure to the beneficent sunshine and air with which God has filled the world. Just when, where and how this exercise be taken is also of some consequence, for it makes a deal of difference what one's emotions are while exercising; what spirit and circumstances attend the effort.

Exercise from a sense of duty, simply, is of some use; but its value is comparatively small.

"The toil you hate fatigues you soon.
And scarce improves your limbs."

A daily walk, especially if it be cheerfully and vigorously entered upon for some worthy object,—not a doleful, sauntering stroll, undertaken from a sense of duty—may be made exceedingly useful; but, so far as possible, there should always be a worthy object (aside from health,) to be gained by the exercise; something besides going out for "a constitutional." The kinds of labor or play that one really enjoys, if in themselves appropriate, bring the best results; they best quicken all healthful bodily functions and most surely make living a pleasure. Any physical sport, in reasonable amount, is good for old and young; but if one really enjoys useful *work* (and every one should learn to do so) then the incentives to healthful, beneficent exercise are constantly at hand—for there is always work to be done. She is most surely in the highway to health, happiness and heaven, who is habitually rationally and cheerfully engaged in occupations which call for a

reasonable amount of daily physical activity and which result in something of permanent value to the world. Such occupation need not exclude the various healthful games or sports which modern ingenuity has provided for us: croquet, lawn-tennis, bicycling, seasonable excursions to the sea-shore or mountains, etc., all of these have their uses and places.

The girl who is properly nourished and who engages in a needful amount of muscular activity, (so much as possible in the open air,) is quite certain to grow up into healthy physical womanhood, especially if she be intelligent and reasonable in the matters of dress and mental occupation, topics to which I shall call your attention in succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER XV.

DRESS—ITS USE AND ABUSE.

There are at least two reasonable objects to be sought in dress—i. e., in clothing the body: *first*, healthful comfort, protection from climatic severities; *second*, such concealment of the body, or parts of it, as a reasonable sense of modesty and propriety demands.

In the selection, make-up and adjustment of one's clothing, of course due regard for fitness should be observed; that is, in addition to considering the health and comfort of each individual, various peculiarities as to size, form, complexion, etc., should be duly regarded, and the dress, so far as possible without sacrificing health, comfort or genuine modesty, should be contrived to enhance good looks and attractiveness. But any style of dress that is immodest, uncomfortable or unhealthful is not simply unreasonable,—it is cruel and wicked. Hence any custom or fashion that dictates un-

healthful, uncomfortable or indelicate modes of attire should be resisted in every reasonable way.

God made the human body perfect, both in its external form and in its internal relations and activities. Each organ is designed to co-operate with all the others for the well-being and efficiency of each individually, and for the good of the body as a whole; and any act or habit of ours that interferes with the complete development of the whole body, or with the normal action of any part of it, injures not simply the one part or function, but the entire body.

Complete development and continued healthful activity of the body demand, always, perfect freedom for the various postures and motions of every part. Any article of dress, therefore, that interferes with freedom of motion in any muscle, or in any organ, is unreasonable, for it is unhealthful; it is wicked, for it prevents completeness of development, freedom of action, beneficent physical comfort and fulness of power. The flattening of the skull, by certain tribes of Indians, we regard as cruelly wrong, because it prevents the natural ex-

pansion of the skull and, to some extent, no doubt, interferes with normal activity of the brain and the mind. The compressing and deforming of the Chinese girl's feet we regard as unpardonably cruel, because, during the years of growth, the pressure produces constant and severe pain; and, what is still worse, it permanently cripples and forever diminishes her gracefulness, health and comfort. But it is equally true that the corseting, lacing or close bandaging of any one's body, whether Indian, Chinese or Caucasian—male or female—is also cruelly wrong; for it prevents God-designed development, produces malformations and discomfort, injures the health and interferes with the efficiency of the victim in every walk of life.

To some minds it may seem incredible, nevertheless it is true, that the custom so common in civilized countries of putting corsets or stays around the bodies of girls and women, is more injurious to health and comfort than any custom of dressing common in uncivilized countries; for the corset (or its equivalent in tight bands of any sort), prevents natural development and healthful action of

vital organs—heart, lungs, stomach, liver etc.—while to compress or disfigure the skull, the lips, the teeth or the feet, can produce, comparatively, little more than inconvenience to the victim, and, to civilized eyes, ugliness of appearance.

No one who wears tight or restraining clothing can have as perfect digestion, respiration, circulation or nerve action, as would occur if the clothing were reasonably loose. And this tight clothing is especially damaging to females, because, as a class they live in-doors, breathing an atmosphere less pure and invigorating than the outside air. Women, because of their sedentary habits, instead of restricting their respiration should become habituated to even deeper breathing than men, whose life is so largely out of doors where the air is abundant and pure. Furthermore, all tight clothing seriously interferes with free circulation of the blood, thereby inducing coldness of the feet, local congestions, backaches and a whole train of obscure and indescribable discomforts. This is particularly the case during the menstrual period. The womb and the adjacent organs are then gorged with

blood, and their nerves become unusually sensitive. Because of the increased local excitement and activity the blood is attracted toward the pelvic organs more forcibly and copiously than usual, while tightness of clothing about the waist or elswehere prevents the necessary, onward, equalizing flow. Simply because of tight clothing, in many cases, menstruation becomes painful, and eventually the sexual organs become irritable and chronically diseased.

Tight shoes, garters and all elastic bands worn around any part of the body, so tight as to "leave their mark" when removed, close fitting sleeves or any other garment, ornament or article of apparel that is worn so close as to feel at all uncomfortable at any time, or to interfere with perfect freedom of motion while engaged in any kind of work or play—all such dressing is unhealthful, hence unreasonable and wrong. In the past history of the world we find that with the majority of people fashion has had more influence than reason. But it is to be hoped that in the future a sanctified reason will more and more control us in all things. During the progress of civilization thus far, the women have been found behind

the men in many important respects; and they do not yet exercise their natural right to dress as healthfully, as conveniently or as tastefully as men do. Now, my dear readers, who have been so often complimented and flattered about your dress that you have come to expect commendation instead of criticism, please do not confound taste with style. It not infrequently occurs that the most perfect *style* is in very poor *taste*.

Contrary to the opinion of many, (if the ideas thoughtlessly entertained by some people can be called opinions,) there is nothing inherent in sex which makes the female more fond of dress, or of ornamental display in dress, than the male. If either sex has a natural fondness for rich colors and showy adjustment of garments, or a right to display them, it is the male. Throughout all animal nature we find this to be the case; with beast and with bird the male is the ornate one, while his mate is comparatively plain as to color and form, and simple in style and conduct. So among all uncivilized races; the man bedecks himself with feathers and makes himself "all glorious" with paints, while his wife and

daughters dress with comparative simplicity and plainness. These facts are clearly recognized by some of our leading women.

Miss Frances E. Willard says: "Love of display does not inhere in sex, and will disappear in men and women both, in proportion to their refinement and good sense." On this matter of dress I desire to quote Miss Willard still further, because most women will receive unpleasant truths from those of their own sex more cheerfully and helpfully than they will from a man, even though that man be a physician and speaks from a physician's standpoint. Miss Willard declares that:*

"Woman's present attitude toward her dress requires some farther elucidation than that it is necessary to the attraction of men. For my part I believe that the costly, hampering and grotesque dress of women—the worst bondage from a barbarous past that still enthralls us—has a twofold explanation. First, that when all men were soldiers and before money was known, they made the women folk who staid at home in places of comparative safety, the custodians of their wealth, hanging it up-

* See "The Relation of Dress to Vice," pages 3 and 4.

on them in rings, necklaces, bracelets, and rich fabrics. Secondly, that the more women, could be hampered by their clothing—the trailing skirts that impeded locomotion, the half-bared head and lightly clad feet which exposed them to the discomfort of snow and rain and cold; the veiled face which prevented them from seeing or being seen, the more were they content to stay in-doors, and thus the more especially did they become the exclusive property and utter dependents of some fierce barbarian, who while heaping his treasure upon them, regarded these fair and fragile beings as the chief treasures of all he had amassed.

A Christian civilization has worn away the most repulsive features of this bondage, but every punctured ear, bandaged waist and high heeled shoe is a reminder that manhood and womanhood are yet under the curse transmitted by their ignorant and semi-barbarous ancestry. Men have emerged farther than we, because they are more enlightened and more free to seek their own development and comfort. They have always set the fashions, because they have alway been and are to-day the ruling class. Man and woman are King and

Courtier in the world's great realm and will be, until he, in his growing wisdom and tenderness shall say to her, "I will no longer make a law for you since I perceive that God has made laws for us both. Let us hereafter, like boy and girl at school, study out, side by side, the sacred laws of health and happiness which He has written in His Works and Word." Man in our age has begun thus to speak to the gentle companion whom God gave to be with him, and as she emerges into the sunlight of truth and becomes a citizen of the great, home-like world which his prowess has subdued for her, she will throw off the badges of her long servitude and appear in a costume at once modest, healthful and elegant."

The seriously sad fact that I desire to impress on the mind of every reader of this chapter, hoping through each one of you to secure at least a little wise help toward rational reform, is this: the fashionable or customary styles of dress usually worn by civilized women, are every where inconvenient and unhealthful; often they are immodest; sometimes they are glaringly indecent; and, in many respects, (varying with the changes of style,)

woman's dress usually is in bad taste. Her health, comfort and efficiency demand a radical change.

Dr. Harriet N. Austin, in a little pamphlet on "Health Dress"* says:

"Allowing, as must be allowed, that the feebleness, disorder and positive sickness which in so large measure characterize the women of our country, are the natural and necessary results of causes which might in great part be avoided, there is not of these causes another more productive of ill than the unfitness of their clothing. It would seem that all Christendom agree in this, that for woman dress is more than comfort or strength, or than healthful motherhood, or than education or successful enterprise in any service or any interest, for in all these respects is she hindered and harmed by it. Scarcely a garment which she wears is constructed first and foremost with reference to the needs of the body. Women have not been accustomed to consider comfort. Being taught that raiment is more than the body, it is a matter of course that they should fit their bodies into their raiment,

* Sanitarium Publishing Co., Dansville, N. Y.

however much it cramps them; and getting used to cramping, they do not much mind it. I am well aware that most women would not at all understand what I mean about the discomforts and injuriousness of their clothing. They think they are comfortable, and great pity it is that they do think so; for this is evidence that they have deadened their physical sensibilities. They little know the outrage they commit on their organisms. A woman with bands hanging on her hips, and dress snug about the waist and chokingly tight at the throat, with heavily trimmed skirts dragging down the back, and numerous folds heating the lower part of the spine, and with tight shoes, ought to be in agony. She ought to be as miserable as a stalwart man would be in the same plight. And the fact that she can coolly and complacently assert that her clothing is perfectly easy and that she does not want anything more comfortable or convenient, is the most conclusive proof that she is altogether abnormal bodily, or else that she has not much idea of the grand uses to which her powers might be put.

"Not only should the growing girl be so ab-

solutely easy in her clothing that there is no possible restriction to growth, but every mother, every housekeeper, teacher, sewing girl, every woman who has any work, or any responsibility to bear, every woman, who, in the goodness of her heart, longs for power to help others, every Christian woman, should be so free that under all the movements of the body, in bending, lifting, leaping, or lying down, no organ or muscle should be at all restrained in its natural action. It is not enough that a garment be fitted to the full size of the figure, and then a half inch or an inch of room be left for play. At least from four to six inches allowance should be made, and this in every garment worn. If all the women in the country would do this, half their ailments would disappear in a year and they would realize that they had entered upon a better life. Is it too much, then, to say that it is a great gain that some women are beginning to appreciate the value of comfort in dress?"

Various efforts are already being put forth to effect a reformation. Indeed it looks as if the good work had begun in earnest. The first thing for individuals to do, *each one for her-*

self, is to leave off corsets, and to loosen the dress so that there may be at all times freedom of motion for every part of the body.

The second thing to do is to lighten the garments; reduce the weight of clothing to the least amount consistent with proper protection, and shorten the skirts till they shall not touch the floor.

The third is to dress each limb, legs as well as arms *individually*, and all parts of the body so uniformly that there shall be neither cold extremities when exposed to the weather, nor overheated legs and hips while in-doors. Overheating must surely result from such an excess of skirts as many habitually wear.

The above stated *three essential points* which demand reform, are by no means all that need attention; but the minor evils may be left for consideration after the more serious ones shall have been corrected.

It is not expected that every girl or young woman, though she may be informed on these subjects, and desirous of dressing in the most free and healthful manner, can at one stroke make a complete change for herself and carry all her friends and neighbors with her, as cheerful and grateful followers; but every

young woman of sense, discretion and conscience can, and therefore ought to, insist that all her clothing shall be made and kept sufficiently loose to allow of complete digestion, full respiration, free circulation and unrestricted muscular exertion. Any woman, without being "unpleasantly conspicuous" can easily take at least a few steps in the right direction. She can put away her corsets, or her tight waists, and in their stead wear loose fitting, boneless waists. On these waists she can put buttons for the support of the skirts, thus taking the load off her back and hips. She can safely lighten both underskirts and overskirts and, if the climate demands especially warm clothing, she can properly dress the limbs, individually, by means of warm flannel underwear; and she can, if she will, select good, stout, warm, sensible shoes. Where there is an intelligent will there is a practicable way. The exercise of intelligence and conscience in this matter will lead many, young and old, to greater physical comfort, to a better state of health and to a more complete development of body, mind and soul.

In my professional study of this subject, ex-

tending now over nearly a quarter of a century, I have become satisfied that a healthful, rational and tasteful dress-reform, on the part of women, is as important to the real welfare of the race as is reform in the matter of intemperance on the part of men. I am also satisfied that the dress-reform is coming. Already large numbers of our most intelligent and cultivated women, young and old, have rejected the corset, recognizing not only the fact that it is uncomfortable and unhealthful, but also that it produces positive deformity. Its use is not only evidence of defective intelligence and moral sense, but also of a gross *taste.* No true artist approves a corseted form. But the corset is doomed. Christian women, of real intelligence, enlightened conscience and refined tastes no longer wear the instrument of torture, so suggestive of the darkness of "the middle ages." In a recent conversation with a physician of your own sex, who was giving a course of lectures to the girls of the high school, in one of our large and growing cities, I learned that eighty-five per cent of the misses in that school do not wear corsets, though all have attained ages at which it has

been customary to wear them. Healthful, loose-fitting *waists* have been substituted, and the skirts are fastened to them by buttons.

One of the largest corset manufacturers in this country, with whom I have had frequent conferences about dress and health, in a recent letter to me says: "You very properly speak against the corset; but your hearers and readers need to have something definite set before them. This, fortunately, is possible in two or three directions. Many will not take the trouble to make healthful garments for themselves; but, fortunately, waists meeting the requirements are now made by several different parties and are sold freely in the markets—not only in the larger cities but in most of the villages of any size. The difference between the corsets and the waists are not accidental, but fundamental. The standard measurements of corsets are, for the bust measurement to be fourteen inches larger than the waist measurement, and for the hip measurement to be sixteen inches larger than the waist measurement. This is for the ladies' size; the misses' size is made, of course, with somewhat less difference. On the other hand, the waists are made with

not more than nine or ten inches difference between waist measurement and bust and hip measurement. It would be impossible to make the *waists* with the same difference in measurements as the *corsets*, for they are invariably made of soft cloth by stitching in a few soft cords; whereas corsets are stiffened by horn, reed or other stiff material. If a woman were to attempt to lace with a waist as she would with a corset, it would wrinkle up and be a complete failure. Most of the waists are made with a steel in front, and also with one upon each side, but these are in a loose pocket and can be slipped out without in any way interfering with the general set of the waist. They are also made with buttons attached for supporting the skirts. (Waists of this character were first brought out by—— who are still the largest manufacturers; but goods of very similar character are made by several other parties.) The most important change which has occurred in the corset business within the last five years has been the steady and rapid increase in the sale of waists of this character, to take the place of corsets."

Such testimony, from such a source, is most

encouraging. The reform at least as to corsets, has come, and is rapidly spreading. Let it spread with increasing rapidity, and let improvements be made till not a steel, or a bone or a stiffening cord of any kind shall limit the freedom and health that the waist is intended to bring. Properly worn it admits of freedom of motion for the chest and abdomen, and to gracefulness of poise and carriage. It also gives a chance for the blood to circulate freely. If, in addition to properly adjusted waists stout, *common-sense* shoes be habitually worn there will be no cold feet or local congestions. Women now may dress quite healthfully without appearing conspicuous or singular.

The union undergarments, if properly made, are also a great gain. Divided underskirts, if made sufficiently small, give individual freedom to the legs, and also keep them comfortably warm. All should be attached to a waist for support. Or better still, let undergarments be made continuous at the waist. The ideal, practicable waist for women I will describe in the language of the corset manufacturer, above quoted.

"The skill of some of our modern reformers

has made it possible for a woman to dress healthfully without having the fact appear in the finished costume. At the foundation is the union undergarment, covering the arms, legs and body in one piece. Then there will be the stockings and the waist, the stocking being supported by hose supporter attached to the waist. Over this cotton drawers can be fastened directly to the waist; or, the cotton drawers and waist-cover can be combined in one garment, to be used in place of the old fashioned chemise. Over this again is a single skirt; better still, the divided skirt. This with a dress in which the waist and skirt are made in one piece, completes the costume. Almost every garment is made complete from the shoulder to the bottom of the skirt, and this is much more satisfactory than will be any arrangement of straps and hooks. Too much cannot be said against massing a great quantity of clothing just below the waist, as is done by people who wear two or three heavy skirts supported by the swell of the hips. It is not only unhealthy, it is unnecessary and it disfigures the natural beautful contour of the body."

The supposition that men, as a rule, are hos-

tile to dress-reform is a great bug-bear to many women, both old and young. This "hostility" is greatly exaggerated by the female imagination. I know that a very large majority of the fathers, husbands and brothers of our women prefer, above all things, the health and comfort of their mothers, wives, daughters and sisters. All men whose opinions on this subject are worth a moment's consideration will cheerfully welcome all improvements in dress. The fact is that, in matters of this kind, women can make almost any thing not only fashionable, but acceptable; the past furnishes ample evidence of this. If the women will but make convenient, comfortable, healthful, modest dress *fashionable*, the men will admire it and praise it far more than they ever approved the grotesque upholstery, drapery, flummery and murderous toggery in which women have so long and so submissively masqueraded. Large numbers of young men, as well as old men, know and feel the truth that was stated by a young Vermonter, in a letter to Miss Willard. That letter expresses the fact so well that I insert the greater part of it.

"DEAR LADY:—It may seem presumptuous

for an unknown and ignorant laddie like me to address you, but I have applied to several others for help and found none. I have seen some of your protests against that great crime so many women commit, viz.: lacing. In this community we have a lodge of Good Templars which has held weekly meetings for eighteen years, and girls who are members of the order and take part in the exercises stand on the platform, and, with blood filled with impurities from imperfect circulation, and faces covered with pimples caused by lacing, urge the *boys* not to poison their blood with alcohol, and ridicule the red nose of the toper. We have also a Society of Christian Endeavor, and young women with breath and usefulness shortened one-half by corsets, attend the prayer-meetings of the society and say they are trying to serve the Lord, and pray that they may be enabled to do His will in all things. The *boys* of this place are a strong, healthy, tough and wiry set; but oh, the girls! Pale, pinched faces, and languid steps; forms created in God's own image cruelly deformed and distorted into hideous monstrosities to make men shudder and angels weep; unfit for wives, because incapable of becoming

the mothers of healthy children. What young man of sense wants to marry a dressmaker's lay-figure, or a bundle of aches and pains wrapped up in fancy dry goods? One of my friends —a fine young man with no poison habits— *did* marry one of them. Five short years have passed away, and where is his family? Two little graves in the village cemetery and a wife who is a physical wreck may tell the story."

Such a condition may not be the conspicuous fact in all communities, but it is altogether too common. The world needs, and Christianity demands, a pure, noble and efficient womanhood. To attain such womanhood good health is essential. Good health ever demands rational dress. Woman can neither fulfill her mission nor enjoy activity in this world unless she rationally, conscientiously and cheerfuly takes up life's duties and performs them in cooperative sympathy with (and, hence, with the assistance of) God's eternal laws—physical, mental and moral.

CHAPTER XVI.

MENTAL TEMPTATIONS AND HABITS.

There is a remarkably intimate connection between the body and the mind. So dependent is the latter upon the former that not a few persons have come to regard the mind as only a natural product of the brain, a sort of secretion of its cells, as bile is a secretion of the liver; and that every person's conscious mental existence absolutely ceases with the death of the body. While we cannot accept this extreme view of the case, all must admit that, in this life, so far as we can demonstrate, the mind is dependent upon bodily conditions, for all its manifestations. Experience teaches that by mental effort we can bring about various conditions of the body, and that, through a proper voluntary control of our bodily activities we may secure, by reaction, desirable mental states, and in a large measure determine our mental power.

In chapter VII, I called your attention to the mental changes accompanying the development of the reproductive organs, at puberty. The influence of that development on the brain is such that, after puberty, one must see the world in a light quite different from that which was possible before.

The fullness, symmetry, healthfulness and quality of the sexual development inevitably determine, in a large measure, the mental qualities, balance and power of each individual. We may voluntarily so direct our mind as to determine certain of our bodily conditions; but our bodily conditions, once established, will dictate our mental habits and, through them, determine our moral and social life—our *character.* Hence it is of the highest importance that every one, early in life, should form the habit not only of thinking pure, healthful and noble thoughts, but of so training the body and establishing its habits that, in return, it shall assist, (I had almost said compel) the mind to think clearly and wisely:

"Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these, reciprocally, those again;
The mind and conduct mutually imprint

And stamp their image in each others mint."

The changes wrought in the body (See Chap. VII) at the age of puberty are no more marked than are the changes wrought in the mind; hence, to those who are in a measure unfortunate in the matter of inherited tendencies or of early training, the period is a trying one, mentally as well as physically. The thoughts are almost inevitably turned upon the sexual organs; the imagination, in many instances begins to run riot; impulses and desires, both mental and physical, tend to carry one away from the paths of virtue and honor. Animal passions, in some cases, begin to sway the whole being, and the period proves fatal to the character and the health of not a few.

Many who are not in great danger of actual physical or mental disaster at this period still find it one of distrust and awkwardness with reference to their bodily functions and their social conduct. They are ill at ease, self-conscious, have suspicions or fears that something is wrong, or in danger of getting wrong. They get to brooding over their strange, new mental states and physical longings, or they get into

the habit of thinking lustfully about their newly acquired powers, longing to know all about them and anxious to anticipate, mentally at least, the final outcome of it all.

If one forms a habit of anxiously thinking about the stomach, lungs, liver, heart or any other active organ of the body, that organ in time becomes deranged thereby. This influence of the mind upon the body is especially forceful over the reproductive organs. So great is the power of the mind over the body that this absorbing thought in relation to the sexual organs irritates and congests them, increases their sensitivenss, tends to unbalanced or imperfect development and, through reflex influence, disturbs the brain, producing headache, imperfect vision, dull or obscure pain at various points along the spine, and many other phases of physical and mental discomfort.

The proper course for every girl or young woman to pursue, is to learn concerning all the organs of the body as much as is necessary for undertanding their position and use, and especially what habitual or special conduct is conducive to their best good; then promptly to form the habit of doing, invariably, the best things,

while thinking about the organs as little as possible. Remember always that careful, anxious watching of the condition or activities of the sexual organs, and especially all lustful or lascivious thoughts, are seriously injurious not only to the organs themselves, but to the entire body and mind. It can not be too clearly apprehended that habitual consciousness of the condition and activities of any organ of the body, aggravates in some measure all bodily ills.

It occasionally happens that a girl of a passionate and contagious nature exercises a very unfortunate influence on a large number of her associates; she mentally perverts, morally poisons and physically injures all who will listen to her. This she does by habitually and lasciviously calling their attention to the organs and processes of reproduction; to the sexual experiences or misfortunes of those whom she knows, or of whom she has heard; to the gossips and scandals regarding people of questionable character. Every girl who is truly wise in these matters will not permit herself to listen to anything that she can not unblushingly tell her mother or her most highly

esteemed confidential adviser. She will seek all the information she needs from pure women; not from ignorant, inexperienced, superstitious, lascivious girls whose talk, conduct and general influence, scatter in the community an infection that is really more dangerous than the aggregate evils of scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria and la grippe. The mind dwells most easily in accustomed haunts, and travels most readily in accustomed paths; hence you should early form the habit of occupying the mind with healthful and ennobling thoughts. Train all your varied activities in harmony with that which is truly noble and pure. So will you avoid much danger that inevitably comes to those who, instead of rightly using the brain, habitually "do their thinking below the waist," as some one has said of the lascivious and vulgar.

CHAPTER XVII.

PHYSICAL POLLUTION, OR ABUSE.

The more delicate and sacred an organ of the body the more serious is the penalty that follows its abuse. The reproductive organs are the most delicate and sacred of all our parts. There abuse brings the most serious of diseases and calamities, not only to the individual who is guilty of the misuse, but to the offspring of such individuals. It is a great calamity to bring into this world a puny, sickly child, imperfectly prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that the world offers for a joyous development and a long and happy life. But those who in any way abuse their reproductive system, thereby seriously diminish not only their own capacity for happiness, but their power for producing healthy, happy children. The bearing and rearing of children is the God ordained work of woman, the particular field in and about which, sooner or later,

a very large proportion of all girls find clustering their deepest interests and their keenest joys.

In the foregoing pages I have called your attention to several indirect ways by which you may prevent the natural and healthful development and the normal activity of the organs of reproduction. In the chapter immediately preceding this I explained how impure or evil thoughts, imaginations, desires and conversations about sexual matters injure not only the sexual organs, but the entire body also. It is now my desire to call your attention to a dangerous physical habit which some girls acquire, viz: that of exciting or irritating the organs by rubbing or feeling of them. I trust that those among my readers who do this are very few in number, but I am assured by parents, by teachers and by physicians—especially by physicians who have had large experience in asylums for the insane—that the number is so great and the evils are so sad that I certainly ought to speak about the matter in this series of "Confidential Talks."

A prominent physician who has had large experience in advising and treating afflicted

women, both young and old, not long ago wrote a little pamphlet for girls* in which she says: "There may be bad children or wicked servants around you who have told or will tell you impure and wicked things, things that are very hurtful and sinful about these organs; and I write this little book especially for you, that you may know what is right and what is wrong with regard to them. You must never touch them except to wash them and keep them clean; for if you handle or meddle with them in any way you will ruin your health more surely than by other means. If you have learned to touch this part of your body, unnecessarily, you must determine that you will never do it again. This dreadful habit of handling or irritating the sexual organs is called *self-abuse*, because every part of the body is abused and injured by it. If you practice self-abuse you will become cross and peevish and fretful, dissatisfied with everything that is done for you; you will not love to play for you will feel too weak and "all gone," from the exhaustion produced by this fearful habit;

* "A Mother's Advice"—Mrs. E. P. Miller, M. D., 41 W. Twenty sixth street, New York City.

you can never wholly recover from the bad effects. You need not think it harmless because you do not feel those effects at first, for they come on so slowly that children are very often near death before they or their friends find out what is the matter with them; and then, if they do not die, the evil will cling to them and make them miserable through all their future lives. When I see a little girl or a young lady wasted and weak and listless, with great hollow eyes and a sort of sallow tint on the haggard face, with the red hue of the lips faded, the ears white like marble and the face covered with pimples, I know that they have committed the sin which, if not abandoned, will lead them down to death."

The reason that such fearful calamities come upon those who practice self-abuse is, that handling, rubbing or in any way unnaturally exciting the sexual organs causes an excess of blood to flow to them, thus producing congestion and consequent irritation of the organs excited, together with insufficiency of blood, and consequent weakness in other organs. Unnatural excitement of these delicate and sensitive parts eventually causes their exhaustion,

and through sympathy the spine and brain take on feelings of heaviness and dullness—and the entire body becomes debilitated. This general derangement and weakness easily become chronic and difficult to cure; the bodily form becomes loppy and stooping, the muscles flabby, the breasts shrink away and hang down; or, if the bad habit be acquired early, the breasts fail to develop properly, the eyes look dull and vacant, and frequent pains in head, back and limbs tell the sad story of self-abuse.

I will quote again from Mrs Dr. Miller's little book, for it seems most fitting that the needed words of admonition on this subject should come direct from one who is a mother as well as a physician. "Self-abuse weakens every part of the system. A good many little girls and a good many grown up women die of consumption and liver disease and brain disease and many other diseases just because they have wasted their best blood and weakened the system by this vile habit. Would you not rather grow up with a good stomach that can digest food well, and then manufacture good blood? good lungs that can take in oxygen enough to

keep the blood red and bounding? If you have these you will be pretty sure to have a good brain, one that can think, and feel and act with a purpose. You will then grow up rosy, healthy, happy and handsome; for, as I told you before, happiness and beauty depend very much upon the health of the body. The wise young woman who intends eventually to take up law or medicine, or any of the learned professions, does not bother herself about strictly professional or technical studies till the labors of the academy and college are completed; these being thoroughly mastered and mental strength established, she is well prepared to take up the special studies essential to professional success. So a girl, on her way to womanhood and its duties, needs to let nature pursue her course, regularly and undisturbed, till all her functions of body and mind are established in harmonious health and efficiency. All premature or unnatural excitement of the sexual organs must by carefully avoided. In order to attain the highest and best of everything that this world has to offer one must be pure in character, modest in action and *right in the sight of God.*

Should some easily discouraged persons who read this chapter feel unduly alarmed or discouraged

by the statements I have quoted from Mrs. Dr. Miller, allow me to assure such unfortunates that nature is a very kind and helpful healer, especially so in the case of young people, whose recuperative powers are truly remarkable. All who have made mistakes should, so far as possible, forget the past, and patiently live a courageous life, expecting gradual improvement. Health is quite sure to return in time to those who forsake bad habits of mind and body, and get in line with the beneficial laws of God.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CERTAIN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS.

There are many practical lessons, outside the fields of physiology and hygiene which every girl should learn before she reaches maturity. Her conduct and habits in her associations with gentlemen, and her relations to general society, are exceedingly important; for it is so easy to becloud a good name, or even to destroy it; and so difficult to neutralize the poison that escapes with every "breath of suspicion." Fortunately, with reference to behavior, society has established certain rules, most of which are reasonable and valuable; for they give direction and furnish protection to the young and inexperienced in many important ways. Still, our American society grants so much personal liberty in matters of conduct as to prove dangerous to many ignorant, thoughtless and impulsive girls. I will sug-

gest a few points and offer some advice which all girls may profitably consider.

The first point is this: There is a tendency, amounting to a custom in many parts of our country, to thrust girls into "society," (dress parade parties,) at an early age, and to keep them in a whirl of excitement during the months or years which nature would monopolize for sex-development. The custom is wrong; for, not only does the girl need all her energies for bodily growth, sexual adjustment, school lessons and light domestic duties, but the excitements, disturbances and suggestions, inevitable when sexually-budding young people are so closely associated, are quite certain to prevent complete, symmetrical and healthful development. Fashionable "young folks' parties," and all sentimental and exciting association of boys and girls during the years of sex-development are dangerous practices. In this matter the English are wiser than we.

The reading of sensational, sentimental novels, or "love stories," is another dangerous habit. Sense, not sentiment, is the mental food most needed at this age. The sympathetic relations existing between mind and

body are so intimate and far-reaching that she who habitually reads exciting stories of romance must surely injure her body, while she dissipates and degrades her mental powers.

All young ladies, even those who are about to bid good bye to their "teens" and begin to count their years in the twenties, should be particularly careful in their personal friendships and relations with young men. Let your visits and associations habitually be in the presence of others; because such sentimental talk as young couples are apt to drift into when in secluded places, and especially if there be personal contact—like sitting close to each other or holding a hand—is more than a matter of questionable propriety; it is apt to prove a lust-breeding experience and a dangerous temptation. Above all things, let your conduct habitually be so characterized by genuine dignity, (the natural fruit of a pure, lofty character,) as to make it practically impossible for any young man to attempt familiarities or in any way to suggest caressing, hand-pressing, kissing, or anything of the sort; for such affectionate personal contact arouses the sexual organs and is apt to produce conditions of

physical excitement and mental weakness which may finally lead to dishonor and disgrace.

Let kisses and caresses from men be restricted to your father and your brothers until to the circle you shall add the *husband*, that one to whom, exclusive of all others, you entrust, for life, your confidence, your person and your honor.

It is safe to assert that no intelligent young woman intentionally compromises herself in the eyes of any man. But, unintentionally and unconsciously, not a few do cheapen themselves, if indeed they do not destroy their reputations, through an over-ardent and inconsiderate desire to be "agreeable." It is easy for many young women to be passive, tolerant and acquiescent, and, by a "yielding sweetness," to invite personal familiarities. This yielding passivity, though the motive may be innocent, does not command the respect and confidence of either sex. While many young men may seem attracted, pleased and entertained by it, still, somehow, and for sufficient reason, they distrust it and, eventually, if honorable and cautious young men, they seek other young ladies for a better companionship. The young

woman who, by a dignified but cordial, ingenuous conduct, compels a young man instinctively to keep a proper distance, in speech and in behavior, commands thereby his most profound respect, and at the same time she secures for herself the best reputation, the purest character and the keenest satisfaction. Happy is she of whom her friends can truthfully say:

"I know her; the worst thought she entertains
Is whiter even than her pretty hand."

Before me lies a letter, this day received from one of the foremost educators of this country—a father, a philosopher and a lover of his race—he says, "I believe many a young woman fails of marriage because many young men have found her to be too easily approachable. She doesn't know what the matter is; but the *fact* is, in her associations with young men, she has thrown away, innocently, the indefinable charm of a certain amount of reserve. Most young men know what this genuine reserve means, and they respect women for it."

All observant adults have seen many such instances which illustrate the above truth. I do not advocate distrust of young men, and consequent fear and shrinking in society.

Nor do I believe that, among matured young people of good character and some experience, the young man should be expected to do all of the "courting." Let there be purity of character and sincerity of motive, and then let young people act as becometh reasonable and honorable human beings.

CHAPTER XIX.

WIFEHOOD AND MOTHERHOOD.

The wives and mothers of to-day were the girls of yesterday; and it is equally certain that the girls of to-day are to be the wives and mothers of to-morrow.

Of course it must be admitted that not every lassie can have her laddie; for, while boys and girls are born into the world in about equal numbers, the destroying influences of war, lust, intemperance and various hazardous occupations still continue to kill off the males faster than the occupations and habits of females destroy them; and thus it comes about that in old countries the females out-number the males, and it is impossible for every woman to have a husband. Still, the difference in numbers is not so great but that, probably, at least nineteen-twentieths of all females who reach womanhood sooner or later enter into the married state; and of those who marry, probably

forty-nine-fiftieths become mothers. So it eventually comes about that the relations God designed for all women,—viz, wifehood and motherhood,—become realities to a very, very large proportion of them; and doubtless it will continue so during all time. Wifehood and motherhood indicate the significance of the reproductive sphere—the object and end of sex, the nature and dependencies of which I have unfolded to you in preceding chapters.

A girl who in physical development, mental training and moral character does not become fitted for healthful, successful, happy wifehood and motherhood fails of her highest mission in this world. Every girl ought to expect and prepare for these relations—not, indeed, by habitually dreaming about them, mentally anticipating or anxiously longing for them, but by intelligently apprehending the fact that, for her, marriage is at least highly probable, and by making of herself as perfect a woman as possible.

If, for any reason, she should fail to enter upon married life, she may still rejoice in her perfected womanhood; for the qualifications

which best fit her for marriage are also her best preparation for other vocations in life. Her womanly charms and powers may be used to bless and help the world in many ways. Her life and love, gifts which have been so perfectly unfolded and cultivated will accomplish for herself and for the world untold good things; and, better than all else, the mind and soul culture secured here will, doubtless, continue to expand in the higher and broader life beyond what we call death. That *life* which God gave to you in the microscopic egg of your mother, and helped her and you to cultivate here on earth, He shall translate and still further transform and indefinitely expand in His more tangible and immediate presence.

CHAPTER XX.

ADDITIONAL MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE.

There is one other important matter that I ought not to omit in these "Confidential Talks;" for ignorance on the subject and inattention to it, have caused untold suffering.

You have learned that the pelvis contains all of the female sexual organs, except the breasts. Two other important organs are also located in this cavity of the body, viz. the Rectum, or lower portion of the intestines, and the Bladder, a sack for the temporary storage of an excretory fluid, called urine, which is constantly secreted by the kidneys, and is retained in the bladder till its expulsion becomes convenient. The health and habits (whether good or bad) of each one of these pelvic organs exerts a corresponding influence on the others, so that normal development and healthful activity of the sexual organs demand normal states and activities of the bladder and

rectum. Fortunately, while a proper care of these organs is imperative, it is not difficult for one who is disposed to take care of herself. Notice carefully the office of each and you will feel the importance of aiding them in their work.

I stated that the bladder was for storing, temporarily, a fluid called urine, which is secreted from the blood by the kidneys. When the bladder becomes moderately distended by accumulated urine, a sensation is felt which prompts one to seek a convenient opportunity for its discharge. This physical desire may be resisted for some time, during which the bladder may become enormously distended and the neighboring organs (womb, ovaries, etc.), not only painfully crowded upon but, through nerve sympathy, seriously disturbed in various ways. The reflex effects of this unnatural retention of urine, are also seen in other parts of the body; and the habitual, wilful holding of this poisonous fluid eventually leads to serious and complicated difficulties. The bladder that is habitually allowed to become too greatly distended is apt to suffer partial, or perhaps, complete paralysis of its muscular fibres, and

thus lose its power to expel the urine, which must then be drawn off artificially, or else allowed to constantly trickle away; both of which processes are at least great misfortunes. You should, therefore, form a habit of heeding promptly all natural demands for the evacuation of the bladder. You may thereby avoid not only temporary discomfort but painful chronic ailments.

As a rule, not more than about six hours should elapse between the acts of urination. The amount of urine secreted daily varies greatly with the season of the year, the diet, occupation and mental states. As a rule the quantity is much greater and the color is clearer during cold weather, or when exposed to cold and dampness. Profuse perspiration diminishes the amount of water to be drawn off through the bladder, while checking of the perspiration increases the amount of urine. If a quantity of this excretion remains too long in the badder a process of decomposition begins, which is apt not only to irritate and inflame the bladder, but through sympathy, to injure the kidneys, the womb and, indeed, the entire body. To "hold the water" longer than

is comfortable is to irritate and poison the system.

The rectum is the lower eight or nine inches of the intestinal canal. It receives from the upper portions of the intestines and expels from the body, in a semi-solid form, the unused portions of food, mingled with certain poisonous excretions that are poured into the intestinal canal at different points. This poisonous material should not be suffered to remain long in the rectum, the walls of which will absorb the liquid portions of the excretory matter and pour it back into the blood vessels through which it will circulate throughout the body, irritating the nerves, disordering the nutritive processes, roughening the skin, over-working the kidneys and fouling the breath; for the kidneys, lungs and skin undertake, vicariously, to excrete what the bowels do not readily discharge.

A hint from the rectum, that it has received material for discharge, should prompt you to attend to the call at once. If you voluntarily and habitually resist the desire for evacuation, the nerves soon cease to report the condition; matter accumulates; poisons are absorbed; cos-

tiveness and constipation, with the common attendant, headache, become habitual; and piles, fissure, ulceration and kindred ailments are apt to follow. Not all of the preceeding conditions, probably, nor any of them, perhaps, will follow immediately, and in severe form; but all who neglect "the calls of nature" are in danger of any or all of the consequences I have named. Teach yourself to *abhor and avoid constipation and costiveness.* It is a great foe to school girls and sedentary females. As a result of habitual or frequent pressure from a distended bladder or a full rectum, the womb, which is directly between them, becomes irritated, congested and, perhaps, displaced. It may be tipped or bent backward by an enlarged bladder, or forward, by a distended rectum; and, as a result of the crowding and irritation, the entire pelvic region may become disordered, producing not only local but general discomfort and disease. Remember that every organ of the body does most easily and perfectly that which it does with habitual regularity. Hence, every one should, by all means, form the habit of evacuating the rectum at least once a day, and at some regular

hour. Immediately after breakfast seems to be the best and the most convenient time for most persons; but *regularity*, at some convenient hour of each day, is the prime requisite.

CHAPTER XXI.

REST AND SLEEP.

All human activity, whether voluntary or automatic, is accompanied by destruction of body tissue. This tissue must be replaced by new material, which must be taken into the body as food, elaborated by the digestive processes, and assimilated by the impoverished tissues. *Time* and *opportunity* are required for this work of repair.

Periods of action must be succeeded by periods of rest. Nervous energy, under the direction of which all bodily activities are conducted, becomes enfeebled by action, and demands occasional relaxation from duty. There is not an animal known to man that can live for any great length of time without rest. There is not an organ of the body that can work constantly. Even that wonderful instrument, the heart, which beats so frequently and so regular-

ly from birth till death, rests half of the time; its efforts are made only for contraction, the dilatation being a passive act so far as the heart is concerned. And besides, for contraction there is such an abundance of muscular fibers that only a part of them are active at any one heart-beat. The same conditions exist in the organs for respiration. The nerve tissues of the body, especially the nerve centers, are the most delicate and unstable of all the organs; they are also the most constantly on duty; hence, they wear out the most rapidly and consequently need abundant opportunity for rest and recreation. Nature has made very elaborate provision for the recuperation of the tissues. It is so arranged that excessive activity of any part of the body is accompanied by sensations of fatigue or pain, and also by mental inclination to cease the efforts which have produced the unpleasant sensations. "I am tired and must rest," say the overworked parts; and so says the entire body whenever the fatigue becomes general. To secure rest of the nervous system nature has provided that during about eight hours of the twenty four we shall become unconscious, the greater part of the

nervous tissue shall cease its activity, become passive, and submit to a reconstruction of the parts that have been impaired by previous action.

We sleep, and during those unconscious hours the vital forces, like myriads of little "Brownies," carefully and noiselessly release and carry out the broken tissues, and as carefully and quietly restore what has been broken down. When all is perfected and ready for use again, the master workman touches a mysterious button, so to speak, and we awake feeling rested; that is, renewed and ambitious for a continuation of the activities that had been suspended. All must sleep, and sleep abundantly, if repairs are to keep pace with tissue destruction. Rapidly growing young people, in particular, require an abundance of slumber.

To sleep properly certain habits should be formed, for nature always does easiest and best that which she does habitually. All physical activities naturally fall into rhythmic motion and keep time like a musician, hence,—

1. It is wise, so far as practicable, to retire for sleep at some regular hour, and in an accustomed place.

2. The body should be unrestrained as to position, and unencumbered by anything burdensome in clothing or bedding.

3. We should let the body take any relaxed position that it naturally assumes and finds agreeable and restful. Pay no attention to arbitrary "*rules*" about sleeping,—for example, with the head toward a particular point of *compass*, and other such nonsense. Sleep lying on either side or on neither side, as you may feel disposed. Sleep on hair, husk, straw, or planks, as you please; but do not sleep on feathers, or anything so soft and enveloping as to smother the body and produce a weakening perspiration.

4. Go to bed to *sleep*, not to review the past, to plan for the future, or to worry about anything. Night-time and bed are for slumber and recuperation, not for continued physical activity, mental dissipation, or lascivious thoughts. A worried mind, a troubled conscience, and lustful desires are most terrible experts at tearing down a human body and ruining its health. When the hour comes to call the day's work done, banish all care, lay aside all business and anxiety—and *go to sleep*.

5. A clear conscience and will-power are the best possible sleep producers; they are the "night caps" *par excellance.* Do not amuse yourself by watching an imaginary drove of sheep jumping over obstructions, by reciting the alphabet or the multiplication table, by counting to one hundred and back, or anything of the sort; but, on going to bed, *stop thinking and go to sleep.* If hungry, eat a little plain food or drink a little milk. If physically irritated, take a sponge bath; if suffering from cold feet, a hot foot-bath may be a decided help; but the great, ever-needed panacea for sleeplessness consists of a clear conscience, mental complacency, and a *will* to sleep.

The amount of sleep required by individuals varies greatly. Children and feeble persons need more than healthy adults. Times of trial and hardship demand increased hours of unconsciousness. Many who tire easily and rest with difficulty do well to take short naps during the day, if possible, and then to sleep till they naturally awake. Rising-bells and alarm-clocks are, perhaps, often a necessity in our modern civilization; but, from a sanitary point of view, they are a misfortune, and are physic-

ally useful in proportion as they are *not* used.

But sleep is not the only means of recuperating. Simple bodily rest, while remaining awake, is one of the safety-valves and delights of life. God pity the poor, nervous creatures who cannot sit down or lie down and rest whenever it is needed. Nature has provided for a great deal of tissue-resting and repair while we continue at work. By establishing relays of nerve and muscle she has given us great reserve force, so that when any of the tissues become tired they can rest, while others take up the work and carry it on till they, in their turn, shall need a period of rest and be relieved by a fresh detail. A man can work certain muscles moderately and steadily all day, because only a part of the fibers are active simultaneously. The limit of human muscular power is seen only in exceptional cases of delirium, or in times of special effort under great excitement, when the will is strongly concentrated on the muscles and all of the fibers are brought into simultaneous action. At such times several men, using only ordinary muscular power, are needed to hold the one who is putting forth all his reserve force. But young

and growing persons, while engaged in ordinary occupations, frequently summon so much of their reserve force daily as to become tired and in need of relaxation. When this need is felt, it is time to sit down, or lie down, and let the nutritive forces pick up the dropped stitches and knit up the raveled seams.

Our modern civilization is one of overwork; rest periods are too infrequent and too short for the needed recuperation. Most Americans are wearing themselves out too rapidly. Our young people are too generally given to excessive excitement and wasteful dissipation of energy. Everything must go with a rush and a push. We feel that there is no time for standing still. But we should know that a great deal of rest may be secured without complete cessation from voluntary effort. As I have already stated, much of our labor requires the simultaneous action of only a part of our organs, or of but a portion of the tissues of an organ that is being used, and an occasional change that will bring into action other parts enables the tired ones to rest. What is true of the muscles or of the glands of the body is true also of the nerves and the brain, and

likewise of the mental faculties. Simply a *change* is often one of the best kinds of rest. Indeed, we have come to use the word, recreation (*re*-creation), to express a mere change of activity. If the change be to something more agreeable to our tastes, the benefit is much more marked. I remember that when a boy, I used to get very tired at certain kinds of work, but could fly joyfully to other kinds of work, called *play*, chiefly because the latter brought into action a different set of muscles and different mental faculties. In order to get the most and best out of life we should train ourselves to enjoy all kinds of useful toil; learn to make *play* of them, so that we may secure the benefits of pleasurable change in passing from one kind to another. By so doing we shall not feel the need of such occupations as are simply sports.

It is wise to alternate, or rotate, the various forms of life's duties so as to secure daily, restful change, both physical and mental. Make it a duty to rest and sleep rationally, and thus secure the most possible of their wonderful aid in building up a worthy womanhood. During the years of most rapid sex-development it is

particularly desirable that excesses and all forms of dissipation be avoided. Give the vital powers all the chance they need to make *an all-around woman* of you. Like oil, poured into dry and heating machinery, are rest and sleep to the growing and energetic human body. Learn early in life to economize in the matter of *vital energy;* it is worth more than money.

CHAPTER XXII.

AMUSEMENTS AND RECREATION.

The greatest tonic, stimulant, and equalizer is genuine pleasure. Contentment, satisfaction, joy, are remarkable for their beneficial influence on mind and body. Occupations that are inviting and pleasurable, whether they be called work or play, are helpful to human development, longevity, and efficiency. But most occupations that are wage-earning and directly necessary to securing a living, or to getting on in the world, easily become irksome and, if too long and intensely pursued, intolerable.

Diversion, recreation, pleasure, are demanded as an antidote to our feelings of depression and fatigue, a stimulant to our courage, a basis for satisfaction with life. All must have recreation and amusement in order to thrive well; but in seeking them it is easy to find and to

follow those which, though apparently and perhaps temporarily healthful, are finally destructive of things good and satisfying.

Experience is constantly teaching us that some—

> "Pleasures are like poppies spread,
> You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
> Or like the snow-flakes on the river,
> A moment white, then lost forever.
> Or, like the borealis race,
> That flit ere you can point their place;
> Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
> Evanishing amid the storm."

All amusements which leave a sting, or feelings of surfeit or of regret, are either essentially unhealthful (and therefore unjustifiable), or they are used in such a way as, practically, to make them injurious. There are some so-called amusements which are inevitably bad, and there are others which are bad only when they are intemperately pursued. So much depends upon the time, the manner, the amount, the associations, the tendencies of various forms of activity called amusements, that it is impossible to classify them rigidly as either commendable or objectionable. All intelligent persons must admit that our lives should be conformed to ways that are helpful

to advancement in all that is really and permanently good. Sleep, rest, change, and amusements are valuable and justifiable only as they contribute to the accomplishment of good ends. Before bringing in our verdict for or against any form of amusement, we must examine carefully into all of its bearings and influences.

> "Consult thy whole existence and be wise;
> That oracle will put all doubt to flight."

Always bear in mind that amusements should secure *rest from irksome toil* and conduce to real recuperation. While they enable fatigued parts of the body to rest, they should also bring into action other parts that need, for the general good of the body, as well as for their own good, to be called into exercise. Genuine and healthful amusements stimulate mental emotion in such a way as to make one forget his burdens and sorrows; they leave in the consciousness a sweet memory which spreads its perfume over and through the succeeding period of toil, and even into the toil of one's neighbors. There should be no doubt about the *effects*. Questionable amusements are usually injurious amusements. Some really

commendable forms may be in bad repute simply because they are habitually in bad company, or possibly because of mere prejudice. Each one should be intelligently examined as to its nature and influence, and be accepted or rejected only after a fair judgment is passed upon it. Some forms require much skillful physical activity or great muscular strength, while others demand neither strength nor activity. Some require one to be out-of-doors; others, to be shut up in crowded rooms. Some require much mental ability as a condition of success; others depend upon what we call chance, *i. e.*, upon forces over which we have no control, and the workings of which we cannot foretell. Some may be engaged in by individuals alone; others require the coöperation of two or more persons. Some require mental activity; others physical, largely, while some require a combination of mental and physical effort. Their name is legion, and the combinations are nearly endless.

Comparatively few persons in this country lack opportunities for amusement, and with many the great question is what *not* to do. Conspicuous among them are the theater, the

opera and the concert; of these we have all grades as to artistic merit and moral and intellectual influence. We have also the circus, the menagerie, the museum, and the mongrel show; of these, also, there are all grades. Then there are races, and fairs, and expositions; there are grand balls, club-dances, and private dancing parties; banquets, receptions, and teas; picnic parties and various gatherings for the old and for the young, or for both together; some close early in the evening and some late in the night. There are games of all sorts—base-ball, foot-ball, cricket, tennis, croquet, cards, dominoes, chess, checkers, hoppity, tiddledewinks, and "pigs in the clover," besides many more of less note. With so much to select from, how shall we amuse ourselves? I answer, *In any way we please*—provided, first, that we can *afford* it; second, that we find, practically, that it furnishes the rest and recuperation we *need*, and that without leaving a residuum of regret or of lessened self-respect; third, that our indulgence does not interfere with the natural rights of others, or prove a stumbling-block to them; and, fourth, that it is not of such a fascinating nature as to

induce us to consume an undue amount of time and energy. It will always require a goodly stock of intelligence and conscience to determine, each for herself, what amusements she shall seek, and where, when, and how she shall seek them.

I apprehend that on this subject, among the old as well as among the young, there is insufficient exercise of combined intelligence and conscience. Few of us ever get so far away from childhood's characteristics that we do not, sometimes, do things simply because we *want* to, regardless of the fact that perhaps we *ought not* to. A little reasoning on the subject will lead us to helpful general principles. We have seen that all workers, whether of body or of mind, need frequent opportunities for recuperation. A change of activity is all that is needed to secure this, in most instances. Sometimes the change should be to that which is simply a diversion, something that is of no value save that it turns our attention from what has become monotonous or perhaps painful.

Symmetry and harmony of development being always desirable, and nature being always

in sympathy with right attempts in that direction, it must appear evident that, in general, the man whose regular employment is sedentary and mental should seek his recreations largely in the open air and through the use of his muscles; and that the man whose regular toil is with his muscles, should seek amusements which, while they rest his body, furnish healthful activity for his mind. This general principle will, I think, stand the test of careful examination. But there is one fact that may be forgotten:—the daily use of either mind or muscle may be so severe as to tax to the utmost one's vital powers, so that she may need absolute, or at least nearly absolute, *rest*, rather than a change to some other line of physical expenditure. Nervous, thin, fidgety people are too apt to go from one form of activity to another, instead of from activity to rest.

In view of this principle we can see that the plow-boy's best amusement will not be found in occupations that require more walking; the shop-girl's, not in that which keeps her indoors and on her feet; the student's, not that which holds her to the house actively using her brain; the active business woman's, not

that which keeps her mind at continued high tension. The student, the seamstress, the book-keeper, and others of sedentary habits, should not habitually seek recreation in-doors and at mental games, but, rather, should get out-of-doors as often as possible, and there indulge in muscular activity; or, if too tired for physical exercise, they should seek simple rest in a passive association with nature. Do not misunderstand me: checkers, chess, cards, and kindred games may be unobjectionable for some persons, under certain circumstances; but sedentary, brain-working men and women should not habitually amuse themselves in-doors and at games which require continued activity of the mental powers.

But, while indulgence in out-of-door recreations is particularly desirable, caution is needed in their employment, especially in beginning the use of muscles that are untrained and undeveloped. Many persons who are not carefully trained and controlled are apt to make unwisely severe efforts, and thereby produce conditions which we would call "founder," if exhibited by a horse.

Young women will not need the caution

which should be given to young men in regard to modern college athletics and certain forms of gymnastics which, as generally conducted, are injudiciously severe. Nor will they require to be counseled concerning intercollegiate match-games which frequently result in intense excitement, angry disputes, betting and drinking,—sources of grave evil, not only physically but mentally and morally. But young women need some special advice in regard to the dangers of exercising in tight clothing. Tight dress, even without a corset, restricts muscular freedom, and the stiff, unyielding corset intensifies the evil by pushing internal organs out of place. It is, in fact, doubtful if even walking be free from danger, if tight clothing be worn.

A loose blouse waist, with full Turkish trousers,is a suitable dress for in-door gymnastics, and with the addition of a short skirt becomes adapted to mountain-climbing, tennis-playing, skating, or bicycling. Physicians are often asked if these active sports are not injurious for girls. If they must be enjoyed in the ordinary fashionable attire the question must be answered in the affirmative. But in hy-

gienic dress, and with muscles brought, by gradual and appropriate exercise, up to a fair degree of development, there is no adequate reason why the girl of ordinary health, if free from organic weakness, may not enjoy them. Stairs are a great bug-bear to many women, and the flights of stairs in school-houses are often blamed for injury to girls, when in truth the blame should have been given to the dress which prevented the natural use of the muscles. Dio Lewis demonstrated, to his entire satisfaction, that it was the dress, and not the stairs, that were the sources of danger. He found that, dressed with unrestricted waist, and with no weight of skirts upon the hips, the most delicate girls would gradually acquire the power to climb hills or stairs without fatigue or danger.

The question now of great interest to girls is in regard to the healthfulness of bicycling. Many are prophesying dire results from this fascinating exercise, and fond parents are refusing to allow their daughters to ride, because they are girls. It will be a delight to girls to learn that the fact of their sex is, in itself, not a bar to riding a wheel. If the girl is normally

constituted and is dressed hygienically, and if she will use judgment and not overtax herself in learning to ride, and in measuring the length of rides after she has learned, she is in no more danger from riding a wheel than is the young man. But if she persists in riding in a tight dress, and uses no judgment in deciding the amount of exercise she is capable of safely taking, it will be quite possible for her to injure herself, and then it is she, and not the wheel, that is to blame. Many physicians are now coming to regard the "wheel" as beneficial to the health of women, as well as of men.

Dr. Seneca Egbert says: "As an exercise, bicycling is superior to most, if not all others at our command. It takes one into the out-door air; is entirely under control; can be made gentle or vigorous as one desires; is active and not passive; takes the rider outside of himself and the thoughts and cares of his daily work; develops his will, his attention, his courage, and independence, and makes pleasant what is otherwise often most irksome; moreover, the exercise is well and equally distributed over almost the whole body, and, as

Parker says, when all the muscles are exercised, no muscle is likely to be over-exercised."

He advocates cycling as a remedy for dyspepsia, torpid liver, incipient consumption, nervous exhaustion, rheumatism, and melancholia. In regard to the exercise for women he says: "It gets them out of doors, gives them a form of exercise adapted to their needs, that they may enjoy in company with others or alone, and one that goes to the root of their nervous troubles."

He instances two cases, fourteen and eighteen years of age, where a decided increase in height could be fairly attributed to cycling. We are often asked if riding a wheel is not the same as running a sewing-machine. We will let the same doctor answer this question. He says: "Not at all. Women, at least, sit erect on a wheel, and consequently the thighs never make even a right angle with the trunk, and there is no stasis of blood in the lower limbs and genitalia. Moreover, the work itself makes her breathe in oceans of fresh air. While the woman at the sewing-machine works in-doors, stoops over her work, contracting the chest and almost completely checking the flow

of blood to and from the lower half of her body, while at the same time she is increasing the demand for it there, finally aggravating the whole trouble by the pressure of the lower edge of the corset against the abdomen, so that the customary congestions and displacements have good cause for their existence."

The great desideratum in all recreations is pure air, plenty of it, and lungs free to absorb it.

No doubt the theater might be conducted in such a way as to be of benefit to many. But when one of sedentary occupation habitually, or even frequently, spends his evenings in packed, close rooms, inhaling air heavy with the exhalations of other people, while the emotions (not to say the baser passions) are being unduly excited, and when this excitement continues into hours that ought to be spent in sleep, then surely theater-going is not ideal recreation, nor is it a wise thing to make it one of our means of amusement. And the same objection, so far as it applies, must be made to operas, concerts, lectures, and all other entertainments. The direct *mental* influences of each kind of amusement are also to be consid-

ered, and if they are found to be over exciting, depressing, or weakening in any way, then a halt should be called. There is also a more distinctly *moral* side to all these questions. Card-playing, under certain circumstances, may be as innocent as taking a walk or swinging dumb-bells; but if one finds that cards are so bewitching as to induce long tarrying at the games, and consequent neglect of business, if he finds that they lead into any form of gambling, then. surely such a person must abandon card-playing as bad amusement.

The verdict of all intelligent, observant, and honest men is that gambling should be avoided, not only because it is morally wrong but because it does not supply genuine recreation to either mind or body.

At social parties and in public places gambling, as a mere pastime, is increasingly popular, and recruiting offices for *professionals* are being established in many of our Christian homes. The man or the woman who, at the social party or at the family fireside, plays any kind of a game for stakes, even though they may be trifling, thereby kindles and fans a flame that in many cases becomes unquench-

able. The progressive euchre party and the social games of poker, at which the stakes are "just enough to make the game interesting, you know," often prove effective recruiting shops for the gambling hells. The gambler almost inevitably becomes a libertine. Gambling and lust go hand in hand. This is natural, for the excitements of the gaming table produce an extreme sensitiveness of the nerve centers, and that condition is actively reflected by the sexual organs. The person thus tempted easily follows physical impulses. The gambler rushes into anything that will either arouse or gratify a love of excitement. The steps of the gambler easily "*take hold on hell.*"

But how about the fashionable party, the swell reception, the social dance, and other popular gatherings and associations of people, in large and in small numbers? *By their fruits shall they be judged.*

The moral quality of most forms of amusement may be determined simply by their *physical* effects. So intimately related are mind and body, so influential is the conscience over physical processes, that nothing which the conscience condemns can be healthful and re-

cuperative. And it is equally true that every form of physical excess or dissipation, inevitably leaves mental recoils and moral stings which, like undying echoes, go reverberating through the chambers of memory, making rest, refreshment and recuperation impossible.

One of the great souled men of our day, one who has seen much of life and has earnestly studied many of its problems, truly says: "If an amusement sends you home at night nervous, so that you cannot sleep, and you rise up in the morning, not because you are slept out, but because your duties drag you from your slumbers, you have been where you ought not to have been. There are amusements that send a man, next day, to his work, yawning, stupid, nauseated, and with blood-shot eyes; they are wrong amusements. There are entertainments that give a man disgust with the drudgery of life; with work-tools because they are not swords; with working-aprons because they are not princely robes; with domestic cattle because they are not infuriated bulls of the arena. If anything sends you home longing for a life of thrilling adventure, for love that takes poison or shoots itself, for moonlight

adventures and hair-breadth escapes, you may depend upon it you are the sacrificed victim of unsanctified pleasure. Our recreations are intended to build us up, and if they pull us down, as to our moral or as to our physical strength, you may come to the conclusion that they are obnoxious."

Wise people judge all so-called amusements by their actual fruits; by their immediate and their remote influence on the body, the mind, and the soul. It is the part of wisdom to cheerfully avoid all that prove to be dissipating to physical energy, or degrading to moral character; and the highest wisdom as clearly dictates that we cheerfully engage in those things which rest, refresh, and energize our God-given powers.

Let every young woman daily thank God for the privileges and delights of rest, recreation, amusements, pleasures; and let her show her gratitude for them by an intelligent discrimination, and a conscientious use. Let one and all—

"Give pleasure's name to naught
But what has passed the authentic seal of reason
And defies the tooth of Time;
When past, a pleasure still."

Womanhood demands such conduct. Genuine and complete womanhood always exhibits it.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONCLUSION.

A careful consideration of woman's part thus far in the history of the world makes every genuine lover of humanity feel intensely sad. A superficial glance at her present condition, in this country, is satisfactory enough to most thoughtless people; but the thoughtfully observant still see beneath the surface serious conditions and tendencies, which can be corrected only by intelligent, united and protracted effort.

During the early centuries of the world's history, as at present in some countries, woman was practically a menial slave, dependent on the whims and caprices of men for any freedom or privileges that she may have had. Christianity opened a wide door for her emergence into free life and happiness; but she has come forth timidly and, until recently, with great caution. Still, she has made progress.

During the last few centuries she has made rapid advancement, intellectually, socially and morally; but, in some countries, she has degenerated physically, in at least a few respects. Physicians of wide experience in this country deliberately declare that not more than one woman in fifty is in perfect health,—entirely free from acute and chronic illness; and the percentage of those who are almost habitually and painfully conscious of a degree of weakness and disorder is very large. This fact physicians quite generally attribute to the unwise customs of women in matters of nutrition, physical exercise, dress, "society" and so-called education—especially to unhealthful dress, sedentary life and monotonous, belittling mental habits.

I have endeavored, in the preceding pages to give you the essential facts regarding the basis and conditions of your well-being, both as individual women and as woman, in the aggregate. I hope you have concluded that your sex is not doomed, either through natural peculiarities or through the purpose and power of the male sex, to continue on earth as man's inferior in any respect, except in the matter

of average size, and consequently, in average muscular strength. Woman may, if she will, secure perfect development of all her powers, perfect freedom of action in all spheres of activity possible for her, and perfect equality with man, socially, politically and commercially. But this she can do only by finding out those eternal, beneficent laws which, in the beginning, were established for her good, and by conforming her life to the requirements.

I trust that all of you who have read this book have come to see clearly and to feel deeply that there is no one special, secret way to secure health; no royal road to womanly development and success; no knack in getting established in complete womanhood; no patent system of training for it; no supernatural route. All that any girl needs to do is to obey the laws of God, as written in all her members and as published throughout all nature. If each of you, individually, will candidly and earnestly listen to God, as he speaks to you through your own highest nature, instead of heedlessly and foolishly following unreasonable styles, fashions, customs and fads, then, most assuredly, a genuine success in life will, in the nature of things, be your reward.

Printed in the United States of America 13